

The Freeman

VOL. VII. No. 177.

NEW YORK, 1 AUGUST, 1923

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CURRENT COMMENT.

THE possible candidacy of Henry Ford worries a good many of our friends in public life, and they spare no pains to show what a grotesque figure he would be in the Presidential chair. Well, maybe; we are not greatly interested, one way or the other. We have, however, been reading a few of Henry's observations, quoted in the *New York World* of 22 July, and we are bound to say that in wisdom and good sense they stand very well with any remarks that we ever heard from the present incumbent. On the question of war and peace, for instance, Henry says, "Remove the conditions that make wars; that's the first thing to do. Instead of scratching about the surface, we've got to go after the root of the trouble."

THIS strikes us, by comparison with the insufferable and afflictive tosh that is poured out so abundantly on this subject, as a piece of high and mighty wisdom. We commend it to Mr. Bok in the hope that it may suggest a fruitful theme for prize-essays. We especially commend it to our liberal friends who are so distressed over mere manifestations of militarism. Again, Henry says, "I have been quoted as an enemy of higher education, but that isn't true. I am a friend of any system of education that really educates. On the other hand, I am an enemy of any system that fails to educate, and why shouldn't I be, and you and everybody? Any kind of education that trains boys and girls to think accurately and act promptly, is the highest kind of education, and I believe in it thoroughly." We do not know how intelligent a bill of particulars Henry could give for this generalization, but he seems to have as sound an idea to start from as any competent candidate is likely to broach.

In his campaign for municipal rule Mayor Hylan recently ventured into the Republican hinterland of New York State, and at Ogdensburg he delivered a speech containing nuggets of homely wisdom such as the American people are unaccustomed to hear from political placemen. Mr. Hylan stated frankly that the voter who is what one calls a good Democrat or a good Republican, is merely playing the sucker to the forces of privilege. The different party-labels, he pointed out, are likely to cover exactly the same brand of goods, and goods of pretty doubtful quality, at that. In illustration he pointed to Mr. Wilson's League

of Nations and Mr. Harding's World Court. Both of these devices, he asserted, came out of the same hat; they are designed to serve the same ulterior purposes, and there is no reason for any sensible American to give a moment's thought to either of them in the face of his own pressing national problems. The newspapers in New York have created the legend that Mr. Hylan is a very stupid person, but his utterances hardly bear this out. Indeed, he seems to be one of the few Americans who can endure the enervating processes of a political career without suffering a fatty degeneration of the intelligence.

WHILE we were ruminating upon the remarks of Mr. Ford and Mr. Hylan, our eye was caught by Mr. Walter J. Millard's statement at Columbia University the other day, that "political morons have a curious capacity for being right at great moments of history, when wiser and more experienced men would be likely to fail." There is no doubt of this; and the reason is that the tyro tends to take the simple, direct and straightforward view of a public question, while the experienced person tends to take the devious and complex political view of it. The tyro may at least have horse-sense; the experienced politician rarely has it. The tyro may have an instinctive higher loyalty which the experienced person has had elaborately bred out of him in favour of an undergrowth of inferior loyalties. For example, Mr. Hylan may be ever so stupid, Mr. Ford may be ever so grotesque; but if either of them had been in the Presidency when Mr. Wilson was, we wonder whether really—really, now—he would have done much worse, or made a worse exhibit of either character or ability, than the "wiser and more experienced" incumbent. Maybe so, but we are beset by all sorts of vagrant doubts.

THE resignation of the members of General Wood's Filipino Cabinet and other native executives has brought to a head the friction between the Governor-General and the natives, which began about the time he landed at Manila. The native officials have deeply resented what they regarded as the steady encroachments of the Executive on local self-government. Even the meagre news-reports indicate a substantial basis for their disaffection. A few months ago, President Harding received a committee of Filipino patriots who came to Washington, and solemnly promised them that there would be "no backward step" in local government in the islands; but, as Mr. Will Rogers recently remarked, the promises of politicians are the lowest form of collateral now current. "We have observed for some time," declared the Filipino officials to General Wood in offering their resignations, "that it is your policy and desire as Governor-General to intervene in and control, even to the smallest details, our Government, both insular and local, in utter disregard of the authority and responsibility of the department-heads and other officials concerned."

DISPATCHES from Washington assert that the Federal Government will stand unreservedly behind General Wood, who is essentially the man for his place. We think this characterization is not exaggerated. A martinet of autocratic mould, devoid of intelligence, devoid of ordinary

good sense, devoid of any trace of democratic idealism, with a true Nordic contempt for the "lesser breeds," General Wood is amply qualified for his post. Under the present system of imperialism, the ideal colonial administrator is an ignorant thug; and the present Administration at Washington has made some happy choices in this category. While we sympathize with the Filipinos, we think the leaders of their movement for independence are wasting their time. The best they could hope for is a native Government operating under the informal super-dictatorship of some American general or admiral, after the fashion that obtains in Cuba; and we are not convinced that the natives fare better under such "freedom" than under the ordinary formalities of colonial administration.

We observe with pleasure that the Department of State has put itself on record in the matter of the so-called Chester concession. The Assistant Secretary, Mr. Harrison, has denied categorically that the Department had ever given any assurances to the concessionaires or taken part in any of the negotiations, and he further stated that the Department had never even received a complete or authentic copy of the contract. He also declared that the Department's policy throughout was that of the "open door." This is excellent, and we give our officials due praise and credit, in the sincere hope that their record may never turn up to plague their successors. The policy of the open door is a sound one, and Germany followed it faithfully, never once departing from it; but that did not save her from a deal of trouble at the hands of France and England, whose policy was different. We trust that the United States may fare better, not only in the Near East, but especially in China, where we think the next most serious collision of imperialist interests will take place.

It is now over three years since the Federal Trade Commission reported that the International Harvester Company was a "trust." No department of the Government displayed any interest in this report until after the farmers of Minnesota rose up the other day and kicked normalcy over the moon. When Attorney-General Daugherty read the news from the north-west, he blew the dust off his copy of the Commission's report, and announced a suit to dissolve the wicked Harvester Company into three parts. Perhaps Mr. Daugherty just got around to this matter in the regular course of business; or perhaps, as political adviser to the Administration, he decided that compelling the Harvester Company to grow three bookkeepers where one grew before, might be a hopeful device to bring the farmers flocking back to the Republican banner. His suit revives memories of the good old days when trust-busting was a major activity of the Government. One of the last cases tried in those piping times of dissolution, as we recall, was inaugurated against this same International Harvester Company by Mr. Taft's Attorney-General about the time Mr. George W. Perkins, then Chairman of the Board, flopped out of the Republican reservation and became treasurer of the Bull Moose guerrillas. The case did not go very well, and there was little public interest. We suspect Mr. Daugherty will find that red herrings lose much of their scent in the course of twenty years.

We respectfully beg the Secretary of War to give attention to an Associated Press dispatch appearing in the *New York Times* of 17 July, headed, "Pledges American Aid in English Danger." This dispatch represents Major Solbert, military attaché of our embassy at London, as having declared at a dinner of the British Empire Service League, that "if danger threatened in any part of the English-speaking world, the boys of America would rally to help those attacked." We are aware that utterances

made under such circumstances are peculiarly liable to misrepresentation, and we are not for holding Major Solbert guilty of a grave indiscretion, on the strength of anything that the *New York Times* might find fit to print. Far from it. We think, however, that the matter calls for an inquiry—calls for it most urgently—and we trust that Mr. Weeks will make one at once, and in all good faith.

THIS incident illustrates one point of immeasurable superiority which the English system of a responsible ministry possesses over ours. Under the English system, Mr. Weeks would be continually on the floor of the House of Representatives, subject to question. When question-time came around, some member, probably a Democrat, would rise and say, "Mr. Speaker, is the Secretary of War aware that an Associated Press dispatch appeared on such-and-such a date, stating so-and so; and what steps does he propose to take?—and then Mr. Weeks would be obliged to make some sort of reply. Under our system, Mr. Weeks is not obliged to pay any attention to anyone's question or suggestion, whether in Congress or out of it, except only the President's. He can, it is true, be reached by a Congressional investigation, but that is a cumbrous method and seldom used. The English system is quick, easy and as such things go, effective.

THE *Manchester Guardian* publishes the texts of two confidential circulars sent out by the Polish Minister of the Interior to the provincial governors, which indicate a trend towards Fascist methods on the part of the new Polish Government. The circulars authorize the use of armed force against persons or groups considered inimical to the Government; they order that Communists be thrown out of local legislative bodies; and they request that political proscription-lists be forwarded to the central Government at Warsaw. The correspondent of the *Guardian* concludes that the Government is preparing a White Terror, and he believes that the national minorities will suffer as well as the Left.

MEANWHILE, a number of impartial British observers who have recently returned from Poland, remark on the extraordinary military activity there. The amount being expended on the army exceeds the entire revenues of the Government. What new militarist adventures are contemplated by Premier Witos and his reactionist colleagues can only be guessed at; but the best-informed British opinion holds that rather than a rash attack on Russia or further depredations against Lithuania, the Poles are likely to attempt to gobble up Danzig and a slice of East Prussia, unless, by a display of force, they can blackmail the League of Nations into handing Danzig over to them without bloodshed. With the Western Powers wholly engrossed in the struggle over the Ruhr, the Polish Government would seem to have a fine opening for some such piece of banditry.

In a letter to Mr. Samuel Gompers setting forth the unworthiness of the Russian Government, Secretary Hughes expresses particular concern about the rights of the workers in Russia. As far as we know, Mr. Hughes uttered no word of protest when his colleague, the Attorney-General, recently obtained a permanent injunction virtually outlawing labour-organizations in the transportation-industry on the only occasions when workers find them useful. Mr. Hughes, however, is for the unions first, last and all the time—in Russia. "Workmen [in Russia that is]," he remarks sorrowfully, "may not organize or participate in voluntary unions." Doubtless if the United States Steel Corporation or the West Virginian coal-fields were in Russia, Mr. Hughes could be more

specific under this head. In fact, from the letter of Mr. Hughes we gather that Lenin and Judge Gary are brothers under the skin; and it is now clear to us that the primary purpose of the Bolshevik revolution was to crush the labour-movement in Russia.

We trust that Mr. Hughes will develop this point and take measures to bring it home to the Russian people. There is reason to believe that the Soviet Government, through its kept press, will give him every facility for this. A few months back, when Mr. Hughes put forth a description of the state of Russia as seen through the faithful eyes of the Tsarist Division of the State Department, he lamented the fact that as there is no freedom of the press in the Slavic land, it is impossible for the Russian people to learn from him the true condition of their unfortunate country; and his subordinates intimated that if Mr. Hughes only had facilities for spreading the Word, the political regime in Russia would suffer a great change. The official Russian newspapers all printed Mr. Hughes's offering in full; but unfortunately the Russians are so dull-witted that the only result was amusement, mingled with some indignation among the doctrinaire Communist brethren. While Mr. Hughes's patience with this ignorant folk is to be commended, we can not avoid a feeling that he is wasting his time and his talents. As long as Mr. Harding keeps him in his present position, some American newspaper is being deprived of a first-class Russian correspondent who might be most advantageously posted in Riga, for instance, or maybe Helsingfors.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS, it appears, has selected a committee to investigate the question of chemical warfare, and according to experts on the subject interviewed by the *New York Times*, the new methods of killing by suffocation and poisoning will receive a clean bill of health. "The committee's report, it was thought," says the *Times*, "will stress the advantage of employing chemistry against uniformed troops in battle as more humane and less dangerous than the old methods. The world-war showed, it was said, that fewer men were killed through chemistry, and that the proportion of recoveries among the wounded was far greater than through the old type of warfare."

PROBABLY it is no advantage to be torn to pieces by shrapnel rather than asphyxiated by the contents of a gas-bomb. Now that the laboratories of the some time Allies and Associates are all busily concocting new and deadlier gases against the coming of the next conflict, it is natural to expect the League to find some humane and pious reason for giving its blessing to this sort of warfare. Times have changed. When the wicked Germans first tried out their chemicals against the Allied forces, what a howl went up against the barbarian Huns from those who had not thought of such methods first! How splendidly the Allied leaders and the Allied editors denounced the fiendish procedure, which of course they themselves immediately adopted! Doubtless the Kaiser's former advisers will feel greatly heartened when their innovation is sanctified by the humanitarians of the League—that is, if it was really their innovation, and if the honour of original discovery does not belong, as we have been assured it does, to France.

WITH 30,000 English dockers out on strike, and new labour-leaders popping up at the several ports, it is natural that we should recall the great dockers' strike of 1889, and the abortive results that came out of it. The earlier affair is one of the most famous episodes in the history of the labour-movement. The men involved were

for the most part unskilled workers of the London waterfront, previously unorganized; and it is therefore all the more remarkable that they could bring traffic to a standstill and hold out for four full weeks until most of their demands were realized. Under the leadership of such young firebrands as Tom Mann and John Burns, the strikers demonstrated the effectiveness of direct action; and then, under this same leadership, the new force and fire in the British labour-movement was diverted within a year into political channels. The Trades Union Congress of 1890 turned to the local and national Governments for the establishment of labour-exchanges and public workshops, and for limitation of the length of the working-day; although there was a feeble protest from some of the delegates on the ground that Parliament was "necessarily from its position hostile to rights of labour." Before long the "new trade unionism" had carried the day, and British labour had come out for what the Webbs call "constitutional collectivism." It was the choice then made that has given direction to the movement ever since; although there was some promise, before and during the war, of a return to syndicalism as an aim, and to direct action as a means of achieving it. Against this background, the significance of the current movement is not yet apparent; indeed it may have no great significance of any sort, but it is at least to be hoped that it will not dissipate itself in the sands of politics.

It has been predicted by experts in such matters that by the end of this century, the population of the "New York region" will have grown from 9,000,000 to 29,000,000. If this change actually comes about, and a considerable portion of the populace still tries to get down into the centre of the city every morning, and out of it again every night, we are only too glad that we shall not be on hand to see the show. The forecast of the experts opens out two lines of speculation, which really merge in the end in one problem. First, it ought to be possible for the prophets who computed the prospective population to compute also the increment which the accretion of humanity will add automatically and inevitably to the value of land in these parts; and in the presence of the actual figures, increasing year by year, the people might see the desirability of appropriating for public purposes, through the convenient medium of a tax, the land-value which they themselves create. Again, there is the problem of congestion, which is usually interpreted as the problem of housing the greatest possible number of people within the smallest possible area, and of moving additional millions into and out of this area, night and morning. In other words, the problem of the realtors and engineers is to add to congestion as rapidly as possible, by building higher buildings at the centre of the city, and by constructing new tunnels, bridges and other runways leading into the middle of the mêlée. The alternative is some measure that will bring outlying lands into use, and provide the people with both jobs and homes in suburbia, instead of piling more millions into Manhattan every day; and here again the means that comes most easily to hand and works with greatest effectiveness and least trouble, is a tax.

The editors can not be responsible for manuscripts submitted, but if return postage be enclosed, they will do all in their power to see that rejected manuscripts are returned promptly.

It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either in substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

Editors—Van Wyck Brooks, Harold Kellock, Suzanne La Follette, Francis Neilson, Albert Jay Nock and Gerold Tanquary Robinson. Published weekly by the Freeman Corporation, B. W. Huebsch, Gen'l Mgr., 116 West 14th Street, New York, N. Y. Subscription rates, per year postpaid: in the United States and Mexico, \$6.00; in Canada, \$6.50; elsewhere, \$7.00. London subscription representative, Dorothy Thurtle, 36 Temple Fortune Hill, N. W. 11, Copyright, 1923, by The Freeman Corporation, 1 August, 1923. Vol. VII. No. 177. Entered as second-class matter 12 March, 1920, at the post-office at New York, N. Y.; under the act of 3 March, 1879.

TOPICS OF THE TIME.

MR. BALDWIN'S NOTE.

AND so, Premier Baldwin has written his promised note to Germany and dispatched copies of it to the Allies and to the Department of State at Washington. The press is full of conjecture about its contents. Our only guess in the premises is that it contains nothing that will offend French sensibilities—nothing, in short, out of which the resourceful and desirous M. Poincaré can manufacture a *casus belli*—and on that we would bet all our old boots and shoes. Now, as we see the matter, it is hardly possible to initiate any measures for the actual relief of Europe without offending French sensibilities; and therefore we do not count heavily on the effect of Mr. Baldwin's note. Moreover, among such expressions of well-informed opinion as have come under our notice, we have found none that seems to count on it much more heavily than we do.

Some give weight to the moral effect upon the world at large, especially upon American opinion, of the fact that Mr. Baldwin has made any utterance at all. Even if he has not said much, the fact that he has said anything in deprecation of French policy will influence the general moral sentiment of Italy, Belgium, possibly Czecho-Slovakia and certainly America, against France. We think so too; to a certain extent it no doubt will do so. The only question is whether this extent extends really far enough to amount to anything in a practical way. If time were of no value, if the march of circumstances could be slowed down to suit Mr. Baldwin's pace, the case would be somewhat different. Unfortunately, however, this can not very well be managed. Time has to be considered as a factor, perhaps the most important factor, not only in Germany's situation but in that of France as well.

If Germany, like the Irishman whom a compatriot was lowering into a well, could only hold on for a minute while Mr. Baldwin spits on his hands, her prospects might be, for the time being, somewhat improved. But this is out of the question, we firmly believe. No one has more respect than we for the *vis inertiae*; we are well aware that a civilization is likely to stay in its groove much longer than people expect of it; but if Germany's course can manage to hold steady through next winter against the deflecting pressure of poverty and misery, it will be, in our judgment, nothing short of a very sizeable miracle. Mr. Baldwin's note will doubtless encourage Germany, just as a coquette's faintest smile will encourage a dolent lover. But the Germans will have to have something more substantial than encouragement to pull them through the winter, and it is to France's supreme interest to see to it that they do not get anything more substantial. M. Poincaré is out for all the chaos and disintegration in Germany that he can bring about—avowedly out for it, at last, thank fortune, in his speech at Villers-Cotterets last Sunday—and "moral effect" will not precipitate fast enough to stop him.

Some say that while M. Poincaré is indifferent to European public opinion, he is quite sensitive to that of the United States. He may be, but we hardly see why he should be. In military strength he holds all the cards; and if worst came to worst, it is inconceivable that he would delay long enough to give Great Britain a chance to reduce his advantage. As far as any country can be self-sustaining, his is; and, moreover, France is not poor by any means. Officially she is bankrupt, but actually she is very well-to-do—*publice egestas, privatim opulentia*, as Sallust said of Rome.

Hence the threat of economic pressure would not trouble M. Poincaré seriously. The French, by and large, are no doubt fed up with war, like all the rest of Europe; but, on the other hand, France has never been hard to stir up by an appeal to sentimental patriotism, and in the second place, the French are already very sore against England for what they conceive to be England's purpose to knave them out of their just dues from Germany.

This is not hard to understand. We are down on the French Government, as our readers know; but if we were small-holding French landed proprietors with some thirty or forty dollars invested in Government funds—and there are about five million of them in France—we are afraid that we should feel just about as the French do. We would say to ourselves, "Here is England, which has been busily raking in loot with both hands ever since the armistice, scheming and conniving, and palavering about humanitarianism, trying to do us out of our share! When she begins to talk about giving back the German colonies and restoring the German merchant-marine, we will begin to take stock in what she says; and meanwhile we don't like her impudence and are all for having a go at her." From the French point of view, there is no little foundation for this sentiment. On the other hand, the English view is, "We have wanted you to collect, and for a long time have done all we could to help you collect. But now your collecting-operations are ruining everybody, and furthermore they do not now look like collecting-operations at all, but like a grab, and we are out to put the brakes on you." There is foundation for this too, plenty of it. Any Englishman can see it, and so can we. But can a Frenchman be made to see it?

So, on the whole, we do not see much permanent gain for Europe in any conceivable readjustment of Anglo-French relations. As we remarked last week, we do not expect war for some time; indeed, we are quite sure there will be none—not because the French Government would not cheerfully enough take it on if somebody would give M. Poincaré almost any kind of pretext, but because nobody is going to give him one. The point is, however, that anything that would really be of any help to Europe can not be done because it would furnish M. Poincaré with pretexts abundant and to spare—fine gilt-edged ones, which it would do his heart good to see come his way. Hence it is, therefore, that we expect Mr. Baldwin's note to have as little in it as Mr. Pickwick's case was found to have after Sergeant Buzfuz's associate had opened it; and we apprehend that any serious hopes which may be based upon it will be found illusory.

'TIS THE VOICE OF THE FARMER.

ORDINARILY the selection of a United States Senator in one of the grain-growing States would not be an event of any great significance; but it is generally conceded that the Republican-Democratic debacle in Minnesota is a symbol and a sign that the farmer is exceedingly low in his mind about both the old parties and their respective styles of trumpery and gimcrackery. In the by-election the good people of Minnesota flung normalcy upon the same rubbish-heap where they had dumped the New Freedom. They performed in such a way as to give no comfort to the Democratic brethren, for the returns indicate that the Democratic party is reduced to the point where the election of a dog-catcher here or there is a windfall.

It is noteworthy that Governor Preus, the Republican

candidate, found it necessary to base his appeal on the pretence that he was a Republican only in a Pickwickian sense. He had probably heard of President Harding, but during the campaign he never once mentioned his name. He was probably acquainted with party-literature extolling the tariff, and had doubtless noted that during his recent trip Mr. Harding extolled the new tariff-law as a great boon to the farmers; but circumstances compelled the Governor to repudiate the tariff-law and to speak slightly, if at all, of other points in the party programme. The orthodox old party war-horses of other States were not permitted to enter Minnesota and take the stump for the candidate; he frantically waved them away. Yet all this discretion availed nothing.

The result, as we view it, is salutary, though we have no great hope of achieving salvation through a political election; and moreover, in such fragments of Mr. Magnus Johnson's utterances as have come to our attention, we have observed no indication of any fundamental remedy for the farmer's unfortunate condition. A generation ago the farmer was obsessed with the notion that expansion of the currency would prove a solvent for his troubles. The principal remedies proposed by his protagonists to-day are of an analogous character. Thus it is proposed the price of grain be pegged by Federal statute, and that the Government make itself responsible for the purchase of the crop at a liberal figure. This sort of scheme seems to be attracting considerable enthusiasm in the grain-belt; yet the farmer can scarcely hope to gain by such artifices for elevating his business to the status of a form of privilege. Under the best of auspices his industry must remain too loosely organized to compete with the powerful oligarchies already in this field. Moreover, if such a plan carried, the result would inevitably be a vicious circle in which the last state of the farmer would probably be worse than the first. The cost of living would rise, with commensurate demands for wages everywhere, and taxes would increase. Privilege would thereupon make higher exactions, and in the end the fiat-price of grain would be paid for out of the farmer's own acres.

Apparently the farmer has not yet reached the stage where he knows what he wants, though he does know what he dislikes. He suffers from privilege in the form of the tariff-law, which has been effective in keeping at war-time prices the things he has to buy, but has somehow been unable to bolster up prices of the products he wishes to sell. He suffers from privilege in the form of the exactions of the transportation-monopoly. Above all, he suffers from privilege in the form of the system of land-value monopoly which strangles his profits on his own soil. Under this system land has become too costly to be carried as the basis of an agricultural business; and there is the nub of his trouble. The farmer's problem is invariably reducible to the simple formula that you can not grow potatoes in Madison Square and get a profit, for the land is too high-priced. You can not sell potatoes for a price that will cover your cost of production plus interest on your invested capital.

How little the farmer may expect from the old-line parties, was revealed in the recent conference in Chicago between Chairman Adams of the Republican National Committee and his western lieutenants. These gentlemen were wholly occupied with devising ways and means for persuading the farmer that he is wallowing in prosperity. Plans were discussed for establishing publicity-bureaux in various States, to flood the newspapers with optimism and lure the restive son

of the soil to the belief that "in principle" at least, the Grand Old Party is the guardian of his welfare.

While Chairman Adams and his colleagues were holding their rally in Chicago, they were somewhat taken aback by a melancholy incident. The price of wheat on the Chicago exchange dropped below a dollar, the leanest quotation recorded since 1914. When Mr. Harding was talking his way to the Pacific Coast, wheat was in the neighbourhood of \$1.25; and even at that figure the farmers of Kansas told him bluntly that, what with railway-rates, taxes and high prices, they were unable to make both ends meet. Mr. Harding had no suggestions to offer about a reduction in freight-rates or taxes or in the price of farm-machinery; but he was eloquent about prohibition and the world-court. With wheat at a dollar, every acre must be carried at a loss, with a commensurate increase in business for the people who deal in farm-mortgages; and under these circumstances the farmer will need a deal of convincing about the soundness of the Republican style of prosperity.

Neither the Republican party nor the Democratic party can put forward a definite economic plan (even if either were capable of formulating one), for bringing prosperity to the door of the farmhouse, because this would involve interference with the private monopoly of agricultural land-values. To separate themselves from the principle of land-value monopoly would be in effect like separating the Siamese twins; neither one of the old parties would be likely to survive the operation. About all that is left for the old-line politician is a small trade in red herrings; and unfortunately the farmer is cultivating a sharp nose for these. His experience with both political parties resembles that of Artemus Ward with the Indians. "While crossin' the Planes," said Ward, "I fell in with sum noble red men of the forest, which thay sed I was their Brother, and wantid for to smoke the Calomel of peace with me. They then stole my jerkt beef, blankets and etsettery, skalpt my orgin-grinder, and scooted with a Wild Hoop." The farmer has been scalped so often by old-line Republican and Democratic politicians, that he is at last becoming wary of both breeds! How he will fare in his new allegiances remains to be seen; but it may be remarked meanwhile that American national politics is becoming an increasingly uncertain game, and therefore increasingly entertaining.

MOUNTAIN AND MOUSE.

WHAT with one thing and another, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace has not been over-conspicuous of late years. Events have not been kind to its ostensible purposes; and international peace seems like a mythical thing, a pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow. In common, doubtless, with M. Poincaré and many other political leaders, we had forgotten the existence of the Endowment; or if in some reminiscent moment our mind turned upon it, we supposed it must be hibernating in some cave or safety-deposit vault, until a fairer season; and therefore we were all the more delighted recently to receive from it a promising-looking publication bearing the title "Relations between France and Germany." The volume is in the nature of a report by M. Henri Lichtenberger, an Alsatian who is Professor of German literature at the Sorbonne, who has made for the Endowment a study of conditions in Germany; and there is an introduction by Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, and a brief foreword by our own Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, who is pow'ful strong for peace when there are no wars to enter.

The volume is offered as a contribution to the cause of peace. Its title is appropriately suggestive. In the present state of European affairs a dispassionate analysis of Franco-German relations in all their implications from the point of view of the lover of peace, would be of value. M. Lichtenberger, despite the fact that M. de Constant describes him as "an Alsatian patriot," is apparently of a liberal temper. His description of the various political schools in Germany, with special emphasis on their influence on German foreign relations, is fair-minded and therefore illuminative. His temperate and urbane manner is a pleasing contrast to the deceptive bombast of such French offerings in the same field as the recent volume of hatred and prejudice produced by M. René Viviani. Yet M. Lichtenberger's book is not a contribution to the cause of peace. In sending it forth labelled as such, the Carnegie Endowment is stultifying its own declared purpose and merely adding to the alarming bulk of spurious political thought, which, like the unending stream of printing-press currency, threatens to bring bankruptcy to the intelligence of the world.

Professor Lichtenberger's failure is in fundamentals. Before one gets very far in his treatise, it becomes clear that he is incapable of understanding the nature of the war, or of the so-called peace. "It seems to us to-day, as on the first day," he writes, "that the proof of Germany's responsibility for the war is a matter of mere *common sense*. . . . The burden of responsibility of the German leaders in the sending of the ultimatum to Serbia, in checking all efforts at conciliation, in initiating the war, in violating Belgium—not to go beyond the main facts—appears to us evident. The fact of German aggression is impressed indelibly upon the French consciousness. This conviction strengthened us throughout the war; it inspired us, at the time of the peace, with the conviction of our absolute right to obtain reparations. In our eyes it justifies the rigour of the conditions imposed upon Germany."

Even though Professor Lichtenberger later admits that a historical perspective may modify the conception that the war sprang wholly from the plottings of German imperialism, it is plain that from such an inadequate thesis as we have quoted one can not get very far. In the light of present documentary knowledge, it seems childish to attempt to deduce the origins of the conflict from the sharp culmination of events in the summer of 1914, without an adequate presentation of the background of a quarter of a century of diplomatic intrigue and preparation. Indeed, as Professor Lichtenberger develops his idea of the war as an isolated phenomenon of nationalist madness, he displays progressively an ignorance of what now is open and notorious fact. He asserts that the war-aims of the German leaders, as they developed, included the annexation of French territory. With this no one can quarrel. As Mr. Bernard Shaw pointed out during the early years of the struggle, it was evident from the nature of the conflict and from the character of the Governments engaged, that whichever side won would perpetrate a brigand's peace, and phrases like "peace without victory," "no annexations or indemnities," etc., were mere hocus-pocus. M. Lichtenberger, however, insists that while certain "isolated individuals" among French writers and statesmen recommended taking portions of German territory, they obtained no official sanction for such ideas, and in regard to the severance of German territory "the action of the French Government and the declarations of our statesmen have always been perfectly correct." He adds for good measure that after the signing of the treaty of peace, "never did

our Government, by its acts or authentic declarations, lay itself open to the suspicion that France would advocate any policy of interference with German affairs."

Professor Lichtenberger's book was completed before M. Poincaré took German affairs by the throat by sending his legions into the Ruhr, so perhaps we can not hold that incident against our author. It seems incredible, however, that Professor Lichtenberger could be ignorant of French annexationist plans as set forth in the secret compact between the French Government and the Russian Government at the beginning of 1916, whereby the Tsar was to have a free hand on Germany's eastern border, and it was agreed that France was to recover Alsace-Lorraine with additional contiguous territory, that France was to annex the Saar Basin, and that the Rhine Provinces were to be separated from Germany. Surely Professor Lichtenberger must know that M. Clemenceau fought vigorously to realize this whole programme at Versailles; and when he was unable to secure the immediate annexation of the Saar Valley, was well content to take the coal-mines, which gave France industrial control of the district, along with political control under a camouflaged French administration for fifteen years, whereby to mould the population to an eventual acceptance of French designs. As for the Rhine Provinces, Professor Lichtenberger makes no mention of Dr. Dorten, the separatist leader who has now been shown to be in the pay of the French Government, and has served his French masters so faithfully since the peace-treaty. In short, Professor Lichtenberger's urbanity and good temper can not conceal his profound aversion to plain facts.

Probably the directors of the Carnegie Endowment had in mind some salutary purpose in putting out this unsubstantial volume, but for the life of us we can not guess what they hoped to accomplish by it. It seems a pitifully small mouse to be delivered out of an organization of such magnitude. The war, and the atrocious muddle of the peace, have left a world of hate and chaos. To find the road to order and stability is a task that calls for the keenest thinking based on actualities; and the road is still obscured by a monstrous growth of war-time passions and prejudices and mendacities. If the Carnegie Endowment could set itself to the task of clearing away this barrier it would realize the opportunity for a great service in the cause of peace and good will. If, however, it can produce nothing better than a rehash of worn-out humbugs and delusions, it would do better to be silent.

SATIRE IN STONE.

THE architecture of our American cities has often been reproached for its commercialism; and there is no doubt that an exorbitant desire to overload the land and increase the rent per square foot has all but destroyed our sense of detail, so that most of our apartment houses and office buildings are good, if they are good at all, in outline and mass—they do not begin to appeal to the eye at a range of less than five hundred yards. There is a sense, however, in which our architecture has not been commercial enough; a sense in which our architects have been untrue to the spirit of their age and have yielded to its demands grudgingly and hesitatingly, partly because the architect has felt it necessary to maintain his dignity as an exponent of the fine arts, against a dull utilitarian community ruled by Boudier in one age and Babbitt in another.

The upshot has been that our commercial architecture—and almost all the architecture of a great city is commercial in the sense that the uses of a building

are subordinate to the primary demand for rent—has been preternaturally solemn and pompous. Our architects are still addicted to the habit of giving banks and office temples the aspect of classic temples, in spite of the fact that no Greek gentleman of the time of Pericles would have condescended to cross the threshold of such edifices except as an amused spectator. Too often the facing of our commercial buildings is of limestone or marble, with its effect of austere pallor; too often the portals have a solidity which gives no hint of the infirm and unstable nature of the business that is carried on inside; too often a building, whose water-coloured elevation was done with an almost fairy touch by some disciple of Jules Guérin, is no sooner up than it is spattered with signs and advertisements whose only effect is to obliterate whatever æsthetic effect the architect, by hook or crook, had produced.

In the long run, the spirit of modern commercialism works its way; that is to say, the most solid and beautiful building gets torn down if a more profitable structure can be erected on its site; and, for the same reason, the most handsome façade may be pimpled with signs and advertisements. Yet, in the face of all this, the architect serenely maintains his air of injured innocence, and does nothing to give his personal imprint to those little final touches which will sooner or later be added to a building to betray its commercial character. The sole exception to this rule that we can remember offhand was the wall-advertisement of the Bush Tower; and that was a triumph.

What we need in our metropolitan architecture, it seems to us, is a little more respect for the facts of commercialism, and a great deal less respect for its pretensions. Let us be frank about it: if posterity is worth its salt it will probably view with hearty contempt a great many institutions that Mr. Babbitt worships with religious zeal; and there is no more reason to assume that our descendants will leave our present rent-warrens standing than there is to deny the historic fact that the greater part of colonial architecture in America was destroyed in order to make room for almost-Gothic and almost-Romanesque buildings. Compared to books, for example, modern buildings are fragile and evanescent. By the time an institution has solidified sufficiently to create a shell for itself, the spirit of that institution has often died: when the building goes up, so to say, the institution goes down. Architecture, in fact, is one of the mortuary arts; whether the architect will it or not, he is always building tombs. This is not a pessimistic interpretation of architecture: it is rather the opposite; for it is also possible that if the architect were only quick enough to crystallize the spirit of an institution, he would hasten its doom!

If this reasoning be not altogether over the border of fantasy, our architects will in the long run serve the community best if they come to terms with business and see it for what, in great part, it is, namely: an amusing game which is just enough in touch with the realities of productive enterprise to make it a little more interesting than chess or poker. Treated in playful terms, precisely for what it is worth, there are plenty of ways in which the architect could make the business-motive serve his humane ends. If illustrations of his task and opportunities are needed, here are three of them:

The first example is a dun-coloured office building which is now capped by a great blue and yellow sign. The building and the sign make sore eyes. If that building were intelligently remodelled, the whole struc-

ture would be a vivid blue and yellow, and the advertisement would simply be a frieze in a general scheme of decoration. The second is a tall steel structure, covered by a heavy limestone façade; it will probably be replaced in ten years with a bigger and more profitable building, for it stands in the line of traffic. Why should that outer covering not have been made of coloured staff? It would have lasted, easily, as long as the present materials will be permitted to last; and if, in the meantime, smoke and dirt defile its walls, it might be repainted in a new colour, instead of being sandblasted. The third is a moving-picture palace on Broadway. It has a heavy terra-cotta "classic" front, and nobody, fortunately, looks at that; it has also, in defiance of every rule of æsthetic decency, a heavy, ill-supported metal awning on which the current programme is advertised; this second item is the principal feature of the building, and every one must and does look at *that*. Why should the architect not have made the façade a sheer wall, and caused the awning, which is now a commercial epiphenomenon, to dominate the whole design? Here, in short, are three instances in which the architect might have concentrated respectively on advertisement, economy, and semi-utilitarian display; and in each case he missed his opportunity by failing to see through the task before him and in a subtle way, effectively to criticize it.

We urge the architect to make the most of commercialism while it lasts because, plainly, we do not expect the system of privilege which supports it to last for ever; and there is just a slight possibility that if the purposes and methods of commercialism were made a little more manifest in our buildings, it would die all the quicker. It is doubtful whether the architect and the mason will have the opportunity to satirize directly our present order, in the way that the mediæval builder so often ruthlessly criticized the very behaviour of the ecclesiastics whose church he was building; there is a certain servility in our mechanical methods of building which makes such an outburst unlikely. Our present business-system, however, carries its own criticism; one has only to transcribe its facts plainly, whether into a building or into a book, to have the result immediately recognized as a devastating satire. It is by disguising the commercial spirit, by giving to the mad agora of business a touch of the dignity and serenity of the temple, that our architects have been only too loyally the followers of their professional brother, Mr. Pecksniff. A little frankness and a little honest disclosure would, perhaps, prepare our minds, by sheer revulsion, for a more humane method of labouring and living.

MISCELLANY.

I AM sometimes amused (in a rather silly fashion, probably) by words and phrases in a foreign language. For instance, I know hardly a word of Dutch, except what little I can guess at through its correspondence with German or English, and I am always vastly entertained by the sign *Niet Rookten* (No Smoking) in the Dutch railway-trains. I suppose it is merely the sound of the words that amuses me (the final letter of *rooken* is not sounded, I am told) though why it should do so is by no means clear; the German equivalent, *Nicht Rauchen*, for instance, does not amuse me at all. One sees this sign often in Holland's public places, and probably it is needed, for the Dutchmen are tremendous fellows to *rooken*. They seem to keep at it pretty steadily, all day long.

It is easier to account for one's amusement over words and phrases that are quite the same as in English, but

used a little differently. For instance, the Dutch railways post up notices forbidding one to *lopen* on the tracks, and the French use the word *circular* in the same connexion. *Lopen* (final letter not sounded) is the German *laufen* and the English *lope*. But in English we do not speak of trespassers as *loping* or *circulating* on railway-property, and when one sees these words one immediately perceives how queer and amusing it would be to do so. I once saw posted in a Belgian restaurant some sort of official document, I have forgotten what, addressed to the *hoteliers, restaurateurs et limonadiers de Bruxelles*; and I thought at once, of course, how odd it would seem to see a notice from the Health Department addressed to the hoteliers, restaurateurs and lemonaders of New York. When I read this sign, I resolved to find out just what a lemonader is, but somehow the matter kept slipping my mind, and I never did. My guess would be, however, that he is a dealer in soft drinks.

CIRCUMSTANCES sometimes make one wonder about the part that indiscretions play in fixing one's tenure of life. Death has been uncommonly busy with my friends and contemporaries lately, and amongst his harvest was one friend who had the most extraordinary passion for taking care of himself that I ever saw in anyone but a hypochondriac. He never permitted himself to do the least thing that would "interfere with his efficiency," as he put it; and yet he died before reaching middle age. I wonder whether a few indiscretions, judiciously distributed through the course of his career, might not have lengthened his life. There is no way of knowing, of course; still, as a matter of pure speculation, it seems quite possible. Sir Benjamin Brewster thought that longevity is largely an inheritance; that if a man were born to be long-lived, he could defy disease, and if not, almost any trifling disorder would snuff him out.

My friend Dr. C., wisest of men and best of physicians, says that while a man does not perhaps actually live by his indiscretions, there is such a thing as a kind of calculated and judicious indiscretion that nature sometimes finds congenial and sustaining. Reduced to a rough general rule, one might put it thus: Whatever it is that you are doing, stop. That is, for example, if you are a teetotaler, drink a little; if you smoke, or drink coffee, quit; if you "keep regular hours," try nightowling for a while—and so on. In short, probably, there is no such thing as bad habits or good habits; any habit is bad, and the good ones are as bad as the bad ones. Something like this seems to be behind William James's famous doctrine of the "moral holiday." One can only apply such a doctrine by a more or less indiscriminate and empirical method; but it often seems that nature will stand only about so much routine of any kind, and that breaking one's routine gives her a fillip that sets her up again and braces her for a longer run.

JOURNEYMAN.

POETRY.

BIDDING GENERAL YEN FAREWELL AT FENG-CHI STATION

(Translated by Witter Bynner and Kiang Kang-hu)

This is where your comrade leaves you,
Turning at the foot of these purple mountains . . .
When shall we pledge with cups again
As we did last night and walk in the moon?
The landscape is murmuring farewell
To a man so honoured through three reigns;
And back I must go to my river-village,
Into the final solitude.

TU FU.

A NOTE ON FRIEDRICH HÖLDERLIN.

It was in 1916 that for the first time a complete collection of Hölderlin's poems appeared. The poet had died seventy years before, and the period in which he had written was past for more than a century. During that time he had had an acknowledged place among the lesser German poets; but the discovery by von Hellgrath of the new poems at once changed his rank, and installed him in a position second only to Goethe's in the hierarchy of German poetry. He appeared now, by a happy chance, not only as the poet second in greatness to Goethe, but as the German poet most unlike Goethe, the poet who, in lacking most conspicuously the capacities which Goethe had, brought into German poetry a spirit and a vision which Goethe was prevented by the complexion of his genius from attaining. For Germany, Hölderlin is in a sense the spiritual complement of Goethe, in a sense his spiritual antagonist, his salutary antithesis. Both seem to have felt during their lives an unspoken enmity. In Goethe's conversations there is, among encouraging comments on inferior writers, no mention at all of Hölderlin; and Hölderlin, in the long period of insanity which closed his life, pretended stubbornly, whenever the greatest of German writers was mentioned, that he did not know the name. Time has settled the quarrel; the genius of Hölderlin, discovered in its fullness only a few years ago, has to-day a greater influence on the German spirit than that of Goethe, and in the next decade it may well become still more powerful. That part of the German spirit which was incarnated in Hölderlin is coming into the consciousness of German culture, now that the influence of Goethe has fructified and been for the moment exhausted.

To try to define what the genius of a great poet signifies in a specific culture is always a perilous task, and most perilous of all when it appears to be successful. But there are one or two broad points of difference between Goethe and Hölderlin which make clearer the essential contrast between their spirits. Goethe was a many-sided genius, all of whose sides were not equally great. He was great, supremely great, as a lyric and dramatic poet; he was great also, on a definitely lower plane, as a repository of practical wisdom on life, as, on the whole, the most unembarrassed liver and observer of life that the world has given us in modern times. His greatness as a poet was the greatness of absolute freedom; his greatness as a practical philosopher was the outcome of his calm recognition of the limitations of existence. There was a third Goethe, and probably a fourth and a fifth; there was, prominently exhibited, at any rate, the *eingebildeter* Goethe, the hero of self-culture who created himself in his own image so indefatigably and with such self-sacrifice; and this Goethe, it will be generally acknowledged now, was certainly less great than the natural Goethe out of whom he was hewn, the mighty spirit who imagined the last act in the first part of "Faust," and who wrote the lyrics and ballads. But whether we admire it or not, we must admit that this was one of the sides of Goethe. He was, as Arnold saw, a naturalist in the great sense, a man who, before every phenomenon accepted or despised by the human spirit, asked imperturbably, "But is it so? Is it so to me?" He was, as Emerson perceived, a prince of culture, a man who incarnated, or at any rate heroically strove to incarnate, the highest normal life of humanity up to his time. He was truly great perhaps only when he wrote pure poetry or concrete criticism of life. But with all his completeness, and

indeed as a condition of it, he lacked strikingly that mystical strain which makes every literature in which it is found so much more satisfying to the eternal needs of humanity. He aspired to it, he essayed it; but when he essayed it he became at best didactic and at worst pedantic. Now Hölderlin is the chief mystical poet of Germany, as Goethe is its chief human poet. Goethe was greatest when he was pure artist; Hölderlin, when he was half artist, half prophet. To use very simple terms, Goethe was inspired by a vision of human life as it is eternally; whereas Hölderlin had his eyes fixed on the mystical goal towards which humanity is moving, and that chiefly inspired his genius. He was most truly himself when he described mankind not in its eternal normal state, but in its movement to a sanctified end. His landscapes are accordingly tremendous and have the outline and the atmosphere of a gigantic dream; but their serenity is not that of rest, but of steady, celestial progress. He lived in this atmosphere, the atmosphere of humanity and of the gods, more permanently than any other modern poet except Blake. He lived with the gods, "daring to bring the gods and men nearer together." His problem was not, like Goethe's, to experience beautifully and normally the life given us by the earth, but to exist in a state of glory, in which the terrestrial and the celestial life were one, in which the terrestrial had become the celestial.

Even in his earliest poems he was haunted by the thought of the dual existence of the gods and of men. Why should they both exist, and why should there be an unbridgeable gulf between them? "You wander up there in the light," he says in one of the most beautiful of his earlier lyrics, the "Schicksalslied," "on soft lawns, spiritual beings . . . Fateless, like the sleeping child, breathe the heavenly ones. Chastely nourished in separate buds, the spirit blooms in them for ever, and the spiritual eyes gaze in still, eternal clarity." "But to us," he cries,

But to us is given
In no state to rest;
They vanish, they fall,
The suffering mortals,
Blindlings from one
Hour to another,
Like water from cliff
To cliff flung downward,
Yearlong into the unknown below.

A profound sense of the irremediable division of life lies on all these early poems.

But in 1795, when he was in his twenty-fourth year, he became tutor in the household of a certain Gontard, in Frankfort on Main, and there he came to know intimately his employer's wife, the Diotima of the poems. This seems to have been the turning point in his life. A youth still in appearance and in desire, with a face, as it is depicted in a portrait dated 1792, very noble and strangely feminine, of an extreme purity and gentleness, he seemed destined to suffer without release if he did not encounter some one with more strength and more calm than himself. Both strength and calm, so far as one can judge from Hölderlin's own words, and from a fine relief showing a woman's face—serene but a little masculine—Susette Gontard seems to have had. They fell passionately in love. "My feeling for the beautiful," Hölderlin writes a little after this time, "is now beyond the touch of any disturbing thing. It is oriented for ever on that Madonna head. My mind goes to school to her, and my disrupted spirit is softened and calmed daily in her assured peace." The phase of

passionate love lasted for almost three years. In September, 1798, Hölderlin was ordered by Gontard to leave the house, and the next year and a half he spent in separation in the home of his friend and patron, Sinclair, at Homburg. But the strength he had gained in his companionship with Susette carried him over the years of grief. The happiness which he had experienced, the possibility, which he had proved, of a life of felicity on the earth, remained with him. In Sinclair's house his genius rose for the first time to its height; he saw the gods no longer as beings separated eternally from men; and he had that vision which inspired his greatest poems, of the return of celestial powers to the earth.

He was thenceforward a mystic; but he was a natural mystic, a poet who never turned away from the earth. His genius was inspired by three great human events which in their fullness, he believed, or rather thought he knew by the power of faith, were to bring Time to its final end, the "*Vergöttung der Welt*." The first of these was the mystical awakening of the soul in the immemorial forests of Asia; the second was the brief fruition of the godlike and the human in the culture of Greece; the third was Christ. Jesus was to Hölderlin the brother of Bacchus and Hercules, and like them a son of heaven in a time of religious darkness; but he was greater than either. The inheritor of India and Greece was to be Germany, that Germany which Hölderlin loved with an affection in which there was nothing vulgar, and whose soul he found in its romantic landscapes and in the kindly life of its common people. In his poem, "Germanien," the eagle, the messenger of the highest, comes out of India, lights on Parnassus and on "the sacrificial hills of Italy," flies over the Alps, and brings the heavenly gift to Germany. It was a sign perhaps of mere human limitation, a sign also, however, of the concreteness of Hölderlin's faith, that he sought to build Jerusalem in Germany, that is, in the midst of the life which he knew. Blake, a man of infinitely more realistic capacity, had before had the same vision, or made the same mistake, about England.

This grand vision of the destiny of humanity inspired the greatest poems of Hölderlin. It is contained in a collection of hymns, some written in free measures, some in hexameters more splendid in their music than those of Goethe; and constituting together a large body of poetry. That poetry is mystical; but there are few mystical poets who are more free than Hölderlin from any intrusion of theology, or who have less than he that subtlety which, however exquisitely it may be disguised in fancies, detracts from the pure poetic value of a work. His genius poured itself into tremendous visions and into thoughts which were simple and great: thoughts which move us not by their subtlety but by their elevation. He did not try to create in his poems an atmosphere of mystery, but to give everything an unearthly clarity; he lived not in the twilight which lies between the gods and humanity, but, at the moments of his highest inspiration, one might almost say, in the full light of both. He was in love with light, and no one has written more beautifully of its splendour and serenity, or of the ethereal clarity which it takes on in summer afternoons in his own land. Yet though he never strove after mystery, his poetry, like all the greatest romantic poetry, does give a sense of high mystery, but it is achieved by sheer greatness of thought and style; and his poems have the mysteriousness not of landscapes seen in twilight, but of great, rocky mountains lying in burning light.

He wrote about a score of long poems, but I have space in so short an essay to mention only one: "Patmos," the finest, perhaps, in poetic beauty, and the most complete as an expression of his body of thought. "Near is," he begins, "Near is and hard to grasp the god. But where danger is there arises the saviour also. In distance dwell the eagles, and fearless the sons of the mountains go over the abyss on light-built bridges. . . . O give innocent water, wings give us, so that with unshaking hearts we may go up there and return back again." Then follows a passage which is one of the glories of German poetry, but whose nobility is almost irrecoverably lost in translation:

So spake I, then led me,
Swifter than I could tell,
And far, whither I never
Thought to come, a genius
Out of my own house. Darkened
In twilight, where I went,
The shadowy forest
And the longing brooks
Of my home; never had I known these lands;
But swiftly, in new-risen splendour,
Mysterious
Through golden mist, bloomed,
Under the steps of the sun,
With a thousand fragrant peaks,

Asia up; and blinded I sought
One whom I knew, for strange to me
Were the broad lanes, where down
From Tmolus journeyed
The golden-hung Pactol;
And Taurus stood and Messogis,
And full of flowers the gardens,
A still fire; but in the light
Gleamed high the silvery snow;
And seal of deathless life,
On inaccessible walls
Ancient the ivy grew, and stood
On living pillars, cedars and laurels,
The solemn,
The god-built palaces.

I have been able to render hardly anything more here than the spacious, processional march of one of Hölderlin's sentences; a rhythm in which, despite the number of qualifying clauses, the movement is not retarded, but moves on with the serenity and breadth of a great emotion to which the poet has entirely given himself. But the splendour of the words it is impossible to convey, for Hölderlin, though not the greatest, is the most noble, the most unapproachable, of German poets. There follows on this passage an account of the poet's coming to Patmos, and an exquisite description of the friendship between Jesus and John. "For all is good. Therefore he died," is Hölderlin's comment on the crucifixion. But Christ disappeared from the earth; and Hölderlin interprets again, with that truth which he always showed in such things, the parable of the sower. There is a period between the sowing of the seed and its rebirth in the living grain, but this is a time of deprivation and not of evil; "for the work of the gods is as our work." The thing most hated by the gods, accordingly, is not silence, but the sound of false voices, and when that is heard on earth, mankind has for the time no significance. Then men do not act; "undying Fate acts, and its work goes on by itself and quickly comes to an end." But when the heavenly destiny is about to commence again, then from the heavens "a saving sign is given, and this is song, shining upon what is beneath, for nothing is common." In such terms did Hölderlin conceive the task of the poet. The gods desire, he

said, that of each a sacrifice should be made, "and whosoever avoids the offering will never know the good and good will never be done by him." He concludes with a prophecy of the second coming of Christ. Seeing that it has appeared once, the celestial Power which we call Christ must appear again in the course of time and deify all life.

Like Wordsworth, and with some striking differences, like his countryman, Nietzsche, Hölderlin was a mystic of the earth, of nature and of man. He was concerned in his last poems with the gods only when they appeared on the earth, in history and behind the forms of nature. He was no longer tortured by the dualism of a heavenly and a human life, expressed so poignantly in his earlier poems; these were resolved for him in the end, he believed, in a form of being in which, while remaining human, he existed in a state of almost divine ecstasy. His task, as he accepted it, was, accordingly, "to bring the gods and men nearer together." This he regarded as a religious work; but where he differed from most of the religions which have fulfilled their mission in the world, was in his belief that in order to exist as a seraphic being it was not necessary to deny the earth, but rather in a high sense to understand and be at one with it. He was a pantheist, and his poems have no appeal to the weakness but only to the strength of mankind. They will attract perhaps no great number of men. But however that may be, they have the power of ennobling those who live for a time in their atmosphere. That atmosphere is unlike anything else in German literature, and its nearest analogue is to be found in the music of Beethoven.

A great mystical poet, Hölderlin was also one of the masters of German poetic style. His sense of form, in a poetry which even at its greatest, even in Goethe, is distinguished chiefly by naturalness and spontaneity, was full-grown and sure. The masters of style, of style in the classical sense, in German poetry, are few. Outside Hölderlin there are only Platen, Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Stefan George; but, fine as these are, Hölderlin was, as a stylist, greater than them all. At his best he wrote in the grand style, in a style noble and large, which in its processional movement gave the simplest words and thoughts the significance and mystery which things take on when they are set apart, in an atmosphere inaccessible to common men. Like Milton he was not only noble, but conscious of the nobility which his theme imposed upon him, and it is this which gave his verse its majestic movement, its conscious, processional advance. He was neither so sure nor so magnificent a master of the grand style as Milton; there are whole tracts of his verse where the manner maintains an incongruous dignity far above the weak inspiration of the moment; there are poems, again, in which the expression and the thought are alike prosaic. But at his best, and in his later poems he was almost continuously at his best, he wrote poetry which in elevation of utterance has not been equalled by any other German, and which has been surpassed by few except the very greatest poets.

EDWIN MUIR.

ENGLISH OF THE MELTING-POT.

I was describing the transitional period in the art of editorial writing as I observed it in the decade immediately preceding the world-war. To use a phrase less robust than editorial writers themselves were accustomed to describe it with, it had fallen into decay. So inanely conventional had the art become even years

before, that one of the three great metropolitan papers of the 'eighties—it was the *New York Times*, to be specific—required editorials to be written of such precise length that their titles would make the upper part of the editorial page look like a flight of steps. This was the paper that long before had published the confusing editorial about a young woman "in the arms of the Mincio." According to the traditions of "Newspaper Row," an editorial writer, the original of the "villain" in Winthrop's "Cecil Dreme," had made a bet at his club that he could write two articles simultaneously, one with each hand, on the least related subjects that might be named, and that both would be used in due course in his paper as editorials. "Courtship" was chosen as one subject for the test, and "European Politics" as the other. The writer won his bet, but he lost his editorial job. It was in one of those two editorials that the river Mincio of the editorial on European politics astonished the paper's readers by claspings in its arms the young woman of the editorial on courtship. As a consequence, the paper in which the blunder appeared was a target for the jibes of New York's old Bohemia for many a day; and, although the writer protested that a sheet of his copy had been misplaced in the composing room, his fellow-Bohemians never definitely decided whether the loss of his job was attributable—if I may adapt a favourite newspaper-joke of the time—to "loose writing" or to "tight writing."

As the editorial art continued its downward career, a fad for "brevity" arose, and became so exaggerated as to have no better justification than the assumption that a thimbleful of nothing is better than a barrelful. This fad finally drove those editorial writers with ideas and office-privileges, to the news-style and into the news-columns. Henry Loomis Nelson was a pioneer. He had been private secretary to Senator Carlisle. After service as an editorial writer for the *New York World*, he became editor-in-chief of *Harper's Weekly*, and finally rounded out a useful career in the chair of political science at Williams College. Having things to discuss while working for the *World*, things which ought to have appeared in editorials and which he vainly tried to inject into his own, he found himself so hampered by arbitrary editorial rules which measured editorial writing by the inch instead of by the thought, and which weighed the thought against feathers, that he fell into the habit of making his comments upon national politics in the guise of "special correspondence" from Washington. He wrote his Washington "specials" in New York, but this was quite in harmony with the traditional "grapevine" service of the *World* at the beginning of its successful career. The "grapevine" method consisted in clipping news-paragraphs from other papers and expansively and sensationally rewriting them in the home office for publication as telegraphic messages from distant places. Mr. Nelson's purpose, however, was only to escape the thralldom of editorial rules of linear measurement. Nothing was deceptive in his Washington "specials" but the date-line, and this deception was only a tiny moral price for either writer or readers to pay for good editorial service.

This innovation, however, had an unfortunate climax. Since newspaper-readers could no longer be fooled with machine-made editorials, the evil geni of newspaperdom set about fooling them with editorial discolourations of current news. Time had been when this was a deadly journalistic offence. Reporters were trained to avoid it. "Your opinions may be valuable in the brains-department," they were told, "but in the

news-department all we want is legs and a nose for news." That time passed away with the discovery that editorials could be written in news-form, after which one of the first lessons a reporter had to learn was how to discolour his news-reports to suit the "policy" of his paper's proprietor.

The reporter of the decade I am writing about might not be instructed very specifically. As a rule he was not. If he did not know the "policy of his paper" in all its bearings—esoteric proprietorial bearings included—it was up to him to find it out. He could make no such embarrassing inquiries as that of the traditional clerk in the United States Treasury who, when ordered to prepare a table of tariff-statistics, asked, "On which side?" Reporters were expected to know "which side." It was assumed that they would train themselves to "lie like a journalist," which, being interpreted, was to lie as best suited the proprietor of their paper. The reporter of the period I am discussing—not far away by the calendar, but to present-day imaginations back in an ancient era—learned to make shrewd observations. He noticed that "good stories" would go; that "poor stories" did not go; that the standard of "goodness" took account not only of the importance of the facts, of the "human interest" of the style in which they were told, and of other mere journalistic tests, but also of the discolourations necessary to bring them into harmony with the "policy of the paper." He learned also that the reporter whose news-stories "didn't go" would soon "go" himself. Thus reporters acquired the difficult craft of interestingly expressing the false, shrewdly suppressing the true, brilliantly discolouring the whole, and naively making themselves believe that their professional lies were not their own but their employers'.

Once in those days I complimented a reporter on the truthfulness of an article that he had written for a weekly paper, an article embodying the particulars of a subject with which we were both familiar and about which he had lied atrociously in his regular work on a daily paper—the *Chicago Tribune*. I wish I could say I was astonished at his reply, but I was not. "That article in the weekly paper," he explained, "was over my own signature; everything I write for the *Tribune* is over the proprietor's signature."

Some sales of virtue went by foul names in those days, even though they were tolerated or even fostered; but this kind was respectable by the tests of the newspaper-ethics of the time. So deep-rooted was it in the journalistic conscience that a trained reporter, upon going from one paper to another, would instinctively shift the colour of the facts he reported. His moral sense was lost in his art of making facts look yellow, black, grey or spotted, according to the "policy of his paper." I would add red if red had been offensive then outside of bull-pastures; for when the *Chicago Daily Socialist* got reporters from other papers, they made the facts they reported conform to the spirit typified by the red flag of human brotherhood with the same artistic feeling that had inspired their colour-schemes when reporting under the yellow flag of sensationalism, the black flag of plutocracy, or the grey banner of those neutral papers of the time which saw good in everything—especially in respectable bad things.

Not always, however, were the reporters of that day self-trained in the art of professional falsification. There were well-informed persons not much more than a thousand miles from Chicago, who told of a cub reporter's experience in trying to make a faithful report of an important meeting. His managing

editor instructed him to rewrite his "copy" so as to reverse its statements of fact, for the truth about that meeting did not harmonize with the "policy of the paper." But the boy's conscience was not yet mouldy, and he wept. He may be weeping still, for his report as published was the reverse of his original copy and of the truth. Yet the readers of that paper believed it, for it was a news-report. If it had been an editorial statement they might at least have doubted it; perhaps they would not even have read it.

The whole newspaper-system in this country rested at that time upon quicksands of untruthfulness. This was doubtless due in part to competition for "scoops." In the newspaper-technology of that time a "scoop" was a "beat," and a "beat" was the first and exclusive publication of a "story." This competition grew so keen that "scoops" came to be regarded as the only very live "news." But one step remained. It was to regard nothing as much of a "scoop" unless published ahead of the occurrence it reported. Sometimes that happened. I recall one of the earliest instances. While Governor Tilden of New York was delivering a speech—I think it was his speech of acceptance as the Democratic candidate for President—the committee to whom he made it followed him word by word in the print of the afternoon papers which they had bought on the street as they came to his house. They might have prompted him if he had not been letter-perfect in his part. This journalistic custom of anticipating the news was carried to such lengths that the afternoon papers of New York habitually issued five o'clock editions at noon so as to be timely.

During that feverish journalistic era, which preceded by many years the decade of which I especially write, a New York business man of the deliberate kind happened to tell me that his favourite newspaper was the *Journal of Commerce*, which was then famous for two things: first, for having been suppressed during the Civil War for publishing a call by President Lincoln for troops before the call was actually made (an ideal "scoop" in a later period); and, second, for never having ventured afterward to publish anything at all resembling fresh news. I asked my friend why the *Journal of Commerce* was his favourite newspaper—with an accent on "news." He answered that he was interested in fire-insurance and depended upon that paper for news of fires. Obsessed with the journalistic craze for "scoops," I exclaimed: "Why, man alive, you don't expect to find any report of a fire in the *Journal of Commerce* short of a week after it occurs, do you?" "No," said the old man, "but when I do find it there I know it's true."

News-lies before the world-war were no respecters of persons, and they caused much unmerited pain. I know of an able, ambitious and successful surgeon whose professional career was wrecked by such reporting. The faculty of the University of Chicago were tormented with the news-lie jocular until they found refuge in ignoring it. This ended the torment but not the lying; and two or three worthy ex-professors and near ex-professors even confessed to a continuance of the torment. Reformers were favourite victims; but reformers always were victims of "the going thing," and the thoughtful among them might well be grateful that instead of being put to death by common hangmen, as many of their forerunners had been, they were only slandered by common liars.

A typical instance of news-lying—a blend of the irresponsible, the jocular and the mendacious—is cited by Miss Jane Addams in her story of Hull House.¹

Alluding to her experience as a member of the Chicago Board of Education, she writes:

I recall the surprise and indignation of a university professor who had consented to speak at a meeting arranged in the Board Rooms, when next morning his non-partisan and careful disquisition had been twisted into the most arrant uplift nonsense and so connected with a fake newspaper-report of a trial-marriage address delivered, not by himself, but by a colleague, that a leading clergyman of the city, having read the newspaper-account, felt impelled to preach a sermon, calling upon all decent people to rally against the doctrines which were being taught to the children by an immoral school board. . . .

As the bewildered professor had lectured in response to my invitation, I endeavoured to find the animus of the complication, but neither from editor-in-chief nor from the reporter could I discover anything more sinister than that the public expected a good story out of these school 'talk-fests,' and that any man who even momentarily allied himself with a radical administration, must expect to be ridiculed by those papers which considered the traction-policy of the administration both foolish and dangerous.

By "radical administration" Miss Addams alludes to the regime of Mayor Dunne, and by its "traction-policy" to the attempt of Mayor Dunne to take over the street-car system, with fair compensation to the owners who were using it to exploit the people of the city. The policy of the school-board was also a reason for the vilification she mentions, for this policy contemplated just methods of dealing with the teaching-force, and a rescue of the public-school lands from plunderbunds of which the dominant proprietor of the newspaper to which she alludes was one all by himself.

Journalistic misrepresentation of that kind belonged in the category of fraud. Its intent was to facilitate large-scale robbery of the public. Other misrepresentations also were fraudulent, but only in a petty-larceny degree. The extreme of these was reached in those days of what I supposed to be a changing civilization with corresponding changes in language, when false news was sensationally published in one issue of a paper in order to make opportunity for publishing sensationally the commonplace truth in the next. This made two news-sensations out of one news-lie, and squared accounts with St. Peter by balancing off the lie with a truth of equal magnitude. A better method was that of a paper once more or less unfavourably known in New York. By establishing a daily column entitled "Lies," it provided a sort of safety valve to relieve the pressure of its need for mendacity.

But let me not be misunderstood. I do not intend to be harsh towards the newspaper-workers of that time. Not only were they virtually under strict orders to break the Ninth Commandment whenever the "policy of the paper" required it, but everything they did had to be done in extreme haste and in the midst of confusion. If your veracious historian were to write every day at midnight a chapter of history that had not begun to be history until that afternoon, and if the next afternoon he heard himself called all kinds of liar just as he started in to gather material for another chapter, then he might get a slight impression of a newspaper-reporter's dilemma on three hundred and sixty-five days in the year at the time about which I am writing. How long would it be in those circumstances before the best-intentioned historian would conclude that the man who controlled his job, with its meagre but sadly needed pay, was the only man under the whole broad canopy for whose rebukes he need care a continental?

¹ "Twenty Years at Hull House," p. 337.

Few of those newspaper-men were willing liars, and in fairness it should be added that some of them were not liars at all, willing or unwilling. As mankind in the mass may be assigned to one or the other of two great categories, those who would rather go to jail than steal and those who would rather steal than go to jail, newspaper-men of the mendacious epoch in American journalism might have been classified as those who would rather lie than lose their jobs and those who would rather lose their jobs than lie. In the latter category there were, indeed, even in those days, men who would not falsify news-statements even in order to hold their jobs. They would not even allow their superiors to lie for them by altering their news-reports in order to make them subserve the "policy of the paper." Such as these did not overcrowd the reportorial profession, but I happen to have known two and to have suspected two or three more. Those two whom I knew enjoyed excellent personal reputations, though marred by the prevailing notion that they were "ahead of their time." They had prospects, however, of reaping some day an honest man's reward. The name of one of them, C. T. Hallinan, is not unfamiliar to readers of the *Freeman*.

LOUIS F. POST.

(To be continued.)

THE TWO SOLDIERS.

EVERY morning General Philippov descended the stairs of his *belle étage* for a stroll in the park, and every morning janitor Vasja jumped to his feet and said, "Good morning, your Excellence!" General Philippov considered the morning walk beneficial both for his rheumatism and for his little grey poodle which he led by an ornamented silver chain with silk tassels; and janitor Vasja considered the General a great nuisance with his apartment full of canaries and his excessive consumption of wood. For the house was heated with wood, and Vasja had to carry big loads to every one of the five stories through the back stairs called the "black entrance."

Janitor Vasja was a sturdy chap of twenty-eight, with a thin, high-boned face and a black little moustache underneath an arched nose; and though he possessed extraordinary strength, which had made him a famous ringleader back home in the annual fist-contests between his native village and its hereditary opponent, the village across the creek, he hated to serve the "bourgeoisie," as he named it, and had a particular grudge against those who "consume without producing." These "fancy" words came to him from visiting a lecture-course in the People's University every Sunday evening. It can not be said that Vasja was a great lover of learning or that he belonged to any revolutionary party. He was too much of a devil may care for either, and it must be stated for truth's sake, that once in a fortnight or so he had a spell of drinking when, to put it in his own words, he "saw the green dragon."

But four years of service in the army had opened Vasja's eyes to the value of education; he never forgot that with a little more learning he would have advanced to the rank of sergeant, perfect shot and athlete that he was. As to revolutionary work—well, it can not be said that he was "active"; still, many an important "comrade" spent a secure night in his little lodge back of the main staircase, and once Vasja induced the General's chambermaid to allow a stranger to sleep for three nights in the servant's quarters. To the girl he whispered that it was an old army friend who had gone broke; whereas in reality the city was being combed for the famous revolutionist who had made his daring escape from prison.

It was their military past that established peculiar relations between the General and Vasja. The General could not forget that Vasja was a soldier; Vasja rejoiced in the knowledge that he was no more obliged to pay the General military homage. The General deemed it his duty to scold Vasja in a fatherly manner, especially after the recurrence of a "spell." Vasja was quick-tempered and sharp-tongued and would not mind recalling the bouts he had seen in the officers' casino, if it were not for the military discipline that had sunk into his bones and forced him to stand rigidly at attention while the General was preaching.

The General, a retired soldier, longing for the glories of active service, demanded from Vasja what would be the work of an orderly; while Vasja, brushing the grey overcoat with its crimson lining, or helping the rheumatic elderly man upstairs, said to himself acrimoniously that this was not a real General, that he was only a Colonel advanced to the rank of General upon retirement, and that in his army life he never heard the sweet greeting, "Your Excellence." The General seemed to know Vasja's bitter feelings, and it gave him peculiar pleasure to exercise his power. When the uniformed man, back from his walk, shouted brusquely, "Health, Vasja," the latter could not help replying in the same loud, strained voice, "We wish health, Your Excellence"; and when the General, meeting him in the street, put his white-gloved hand to his cap, Vasja's hand involuntarily flew to the rim of his hat, his pace becoming mechanical and his feet assuming a military beat.

Vasja hated it. As time passed, he grew to believe that the man was mocking him. He even went so far as to look for another job. Yet times were hard, and good jobs were not rolling around in the streets. Vasja had to acquiesce. After all, he said to himself, this was the established order of things. He could not change it. Every morning, and often also in the afternoon, the General passed by and Vasja stood up to say "Good morning, Your Excellence!" The General lived in the best apartment with seven rooms and a large bath. Vasja lived in his lodge with an inclined front wall and light coming from the courtyard through a round hole. The General demanded excessive service, and at Christmas he gave Vasja only one rouble, whereas the professor on the top floor gave him three and the banker's son on the ground floor even as much as five.

It was the established order of things, yet a storm came and the established order collapsed. The General received his pension no more. Vasja, who had been called to the colours early in 1915 and advanced to the rank of an ensign in 1916, joined the Red army. His valiant service in the Ukraine against Denikin gave him the command over a regiment. His famous stand against Kolchak near Kazan bought him the rare distinction of the medal of the Red Banner Order. His furious onrush at the Wrangel fortifications at Perekop secured the Red army a rare victory. When peace was established, Vasja, now Vassili Fyodorovitch Goubin, Division Commander and member of the High Military Council, returned to Moscow after an absence of six years. He was asked to choose his place of residence, and memory subtly dictated the number of the only house he had known well in Moscow. The house now belonged to the municipal Soviet, and in the *belle étage* a couple of rooms were vacated for Commander Comrade Vassili Goubin.

It was not long before General Philippov also returned to Moscow. He had fled in the first years of the great turmoil; had gone first to Kiev, then to Rostov, then to Constantinople. He had hoped, nay, was sure, that the Red rule was only a passing calamity, a freak of fate. He knew that the armies of law and order were going to free

Mother Russia from the Red affliction. It was natural for him to follow the White armies, to retreat with them and to bind his life with his own class. For a brief time, he even assumed the command of a regiment, his rheumatic pains notwithstanding. But the White armies were defeated, the forces melted away, the officers fled to foreign countries. Philippov remained without means of existence and without an outlook for better times. In despair, he applied for and obtained permission to return to Moscow, "provided he refrain from all political activity."

Aged, tired, poorly dressed, former General Philippov almost automatically directed his steps toward the house he had lived in. He had to earn a living. He knew no trade, had no profession. With thankfulness he received the janitor's job. It secured him lodging and a *payók* (food ration), and work was not so hard these days since people had learned to demand less.

Every morning Comrade Vassili Goubin, in his austere grey uniform with the red badges on his sleeves and the red star on the grey helmet, descends the stairs of the *belle étage* in a brisk, businesslike manner. Every morning former General Philippov gets up from his bench in front of the house and returns Vasja's greeting with, "Good morning, Your Excellency!"

Vasja is visibly annoyed by the performance. He would rather pass by the old man without a greeting. But he is afraid of hurting his feelings. He once called the old man's attention to the fact, that "Excellency" had been abolished in the army. Yet the old man, rigidly at attention, replied: "You are a commander of a division, and this is the greeting appropriate to your rank according to military regulations. I am an old soldier and know the rules." Goubin left him alone.

I happened to visit in the house where both lived. My friends pointed out to me the two military men. The General, in his old khaki coat and high boots, still retained some of his military carriage. Back in his lodge, on a peg, they told me, still hung his old General's great-coat with crimson lining. There was also a canary in a wire cage, and rumour had it that the bird had been sent to Philippov by Vassili Goubin.

I had the impertinence to ask the old man why he greeted the commander in the old fashion, and he replied: "Military rules, my son, are something no civilian can understand. The man is a General and an Excellency, no matter what he was before. His rank in his country's army is high. And I am a soldier and proud of it."

After a while he added:

"Besides, how else could I greet him? 'Good morning, Comrade Commander?' But he is not and never will be my comrade!"

And a fierce light shone in the eyes of the old soldier.

MOISSAYE J. OLGIN.

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

THE THEATRE OF THRILLS.

SIRS: Once upon a time a farmer went to see a travelling circus. Before one of its sideshows, a barker advertised a five-legged calf. The farmer bought a ticket. When he came out, several gaping bystanders questioned him about the wonder within. "By heck!" said he, "that critter's got five legs all right, and I'll be durned if it ain't got two heads as well." Three of his auditors thereupon ventured in. When they came out, they said, "Gosh all hemlock! Bill didn't see the hull show. The critter's got five legs, two heads, and *three tails!*"

All of which is pertinent in view of the announcement that the Grand Guignol, the theatre of shocks and thrills in Paris, will soon venture across the Atlantic.

For many years, a majority of American tourists have considered their trips to Paris wasted unless they have been properly thrilled at the Grand Guignol. Those that have penetrated into the centre of Montmartre to satisfy their curiosity have usually come away sadder and wiser. But, like the farmer, they hate to admit having been taken in, and consequently do their utmost to perpetuate the myth. So, year by year, the Grand Guignol grows more impressive to the world outside.

Some ten years ago, Mr. Holbrook Blinn's company, known as The Princess Players, presented a series of thrillers in New York. At the time the critics referred to that organization as the "American Grand Guignol." Insofar as Mr. Blinn's policy was obviously the presentation of "shockers," the comparison held good. But in justice to Mr. Blinn, let us not forget that along with the one-act hair-raisers, the Princess Players gave us Schnitzler's "Green Cockatoo" and other such excellent theatrical fare, and that the presentations at the Princess were never devoid of a certain artistry. The Grand Guignol certainly does not go out of its way to present plays of any artistic quality. The best that can be said of its mounting is that it is extremely cheap and tawdry realism. The repertoire rarely rises above the level of penny-dreadfuls. The acting belongs to the school of the old Bowery Theatre. To be sure, the Grand Guignol bill of four or five one-act plays usually included a comedy or two, and the humour of these is about on a par with the "oleo" of American burlesque shows.

One of the most diverting tricks of the Grand Guignol is its manipulation of clagues. At performances of plays proclaimed by the management as being extraordinarily hair-raising, just when the plot is in its penny-dreadfullest stage, shrieks burst from various parts of the house. On occasion, the shriekers leap to their feet and rush out, overcome by the nerve-racking performance and anxious to collect their well-earned honoraria provided by the thoughtful management.

Mr. George Jean Nathan, in a delightfully written chapter of one of his early books, deplored the vanishing of the old-time "ten-twenty-third" melodrama. He bewailed the passing of the booted villain, the persecuted heroine, and the khaki-shirted hero, all posed picturesquely against flapping scenery. He yearned for the simple bloodthirsty plot wherein villainy was foiled and virtue was its own reward, and gore ran red behind the footlights. Those good old days will come again with the visit of the Grand Guignol. Foul deeds will be done, good red-ink blood will spill (for the Grand Guignol is nothing if not realistic), and lifelike canvas sets will flap.

There is one important difference between the thriller of the Grand Guignol and the melodrama of old Third Avenue. The latter type always ended with villainy foiled and virtue more than its own reward. The presentations of the Grand Guignol are mainly concerned with the doing of foul deeds and thrilling, and the villain gets away with it as often as not. But perhaps the most popular theme with the clientele of Grand Guignol is revenge. One of the great Grand Guignol successes, based on this *motif*, is "The Laboratory of Hallucinations," by Henri Bauche and André de Lorde. I present a brief résumé of it, as a message of reassurance to those who mourn the passing of melodrama.

The chief figure in the play is a physician whose devotion to scientific work absorbs so much of his time that his neglected wife enters upon an affair with his best friend. (Auspicious beginning!) The physician is interested in a device which enables him to study the workings of the brain of a person suffering from hallucinations. His scientific investigations develop to a point whereby he can, through a delicate operation, implant hallucinations

in the brain of a subject. (Science will be served.) The lover is injured in a motor-accident and brought into the physician's laboratory. In a delirium, the injured man partly reveals the illicit affair. The physician's suspicions are aroused. He searches the patient and discovers—an incriminating note. (Good old device of Theodore Kremer.) The physician then decides to perform his sinister operation. In the last act we see the victim of the operation, raving, and the subject of dreadful hallucinations. The physician summons his wife, tells her what he has done, and to the accompaniment of her lover's ravings, taunts her with her infidelity and drives her from the house. The physician is standing, brooding, with his back to the operating table. On the other side of the table, the victim is sitting on the floor. Suddenly the victim arises, hurls the physician on the operating table, and starts to perform upon him the same dreadful operation. Flash of scalpel and spurt of blood—for, as I have mentioned, the Grand Guignol is strong on realism. (The actor who plays the physician is careful at this point to twist his head so that the ink-blood does not soil his collar. Laundry-charges are high in Paris.)

Such is the hokum around which so tremendous a myth has grown. I am, etc.,

Paris.

ARTHUR MOSS.

ART.

MODERN ART.

THE WILD BEASTS.

TO-DAY when the position of Cézanne and Redon is scarcely less assured than that of Courbet, when Gauguin, van Gogh and Seurat are rapidly being submerged in the ever-advancing wave of the accepted and canonized, one asks oneself what new direction appeared in the art of the late 'nineties and the first years of this century which could win for its producers the title of "*les Fauves*"—the Wild Beasts—and give it the special quality that still seems fresh to-day, even though two movements have appeared since. Here at last is modern art, says some reader who has waited patiently to get done with the talk about the pictures of fifty or seventy-five years ago, "things that anyone can understand." Are old pictures really better understood than modern ones? Only a little, I believe; they are more familiar, more accepted, but as mysterious, essentially, as the works of our own time. At all events, if anyone thinks there is a fundamental difference of purpose between the old and the new, let me refer him to one of the most admirable articles on art that has appeared in many a day—the one contributed by Henri Matisse to the *Grande Revue* of 25 December, 1908. Reading it, one almost thinks that the writer is taking a mischievous pleasure in disconcerting an audience assembled to hear him roar and howl, as befits a wild beast; whereas his words about the old themes of colour, composition and expression are traditional in the severest and best sense. He is conscious of his effect and replies to the criticism of it by saying that there is never anything new in art. Later on, echoes of this statement came from people who, after having admired his originality, or after rebuking him for a pretence to it, discovered that Matisse had not done much unheard-of things after all: witness the portraits in encaustic of Alexandrian Egypt, the painting of the Persians or especially the frescoes of ancient Crete. As for Georges Rouault, that other wild man, wherein was his work essentially unlike what had been shown six ages ago by Daumier—or was it by the glass painters of the cathedrals? And Derain and Dufy, had they

done more than follow the hint of Gauguin (who probably had it from Manet), that a whole treasury of new material lay stored up in the old French prints that were produced in great numbers for the houses of the poor?

All this has truth in it, but more than this must be said in order to explain why these painters gained their prestige, why their admirers see them as the true continuers of the great line we have been tracing, and why the direction taken by the following group is inexplicable without them. The answer to these various questions seems to me to appear of itself when we recognize that the period which *les Fauves* inaugurated is one of conscious purpose, as compared with the more or less complete reliance on instinct of the time before. Seurat, with his intellectual analysis of the means of the artist, is therefore its immediate forerunner, but the world was ready for far wider consequences of his idea than his pictures at first seemed to indicate. When Seurat died, in 1891, Gauguin had not given much more than a hint of the expressiveness of the design which the non-realistic art of the primitives had taught him. Van Gogh's work was done, but it was hidden away for several years after his death, and only then began to make artists and public aware of the directness with which its flaming colour externalized the passion of the man. Above all, in 1891 Cézanne had scarcely entered upon the development which was to influence the new generation most deeply—that extraordinary series of pictures in which we can all see to-day that he was evolving as the material of his art a structure of form and colour derived from the laws of the mind which he saw incorporated in the works in the museums, and was using the appearances of nature as means for his research.

It is because the movement of *les Fauves* synthesizes these elements that we regard it as the next step in the evolution of modern art. Its argument (offered in no manifesto but deducible from the work) would be that the expressive and æsthetic qualities being the essential of the pictures of the preceding school—or rather of all schools—it is the artist's business to pursue form and colour and expression, to make them unite indissolubly into a work of art, something belonging to a different sphere from that of the vague abstraction which we call Nature. Art defines our sensations and is the means by which men know one another: nature is seen by different epochs, different races and different individuals as an infinitely varied thing, one that is known, after all, only as shaped and coloured by the preferences, prejudices, mood and experience of those who look on it. But take men like Rubens or Chardin, some one would object; is there not in their work a phase of nature as we all see it, as well as the æsthetic qualities which we agree on as essential? Yes, a phase, if you like, or to be more exact, various phases; and a Leonardo or a great Chinese artist would offer quite different phases, and a Holbein or a Greek vase-painting still others. Each time that a master has made us see something that we had not seen before, we call it nature; and if we do not stop to consider, we have the illusion that this thing has been defined and is unchangeable—but that is only illusion. The measure of an art, the thing that makes the difficulty about appreciating a new art, is the extent to which it changes our vision.

The tremendous movement of thought which began coincidentally with the French Revolution had given artists the power to change the vision of Europe again and again in our great period. We have seen that Impressionism, as new as it appeared at first, went more

to surface than to depth. After Impressionism (not to mention the weaklings who merely tried to repeat the work of its masters, even less to consider the poor, still-born things of the academies, the magazines, the inferior museums and the public buildings), the 'nineties brought forth a group of men like Bonnard, Vuillard and Roussel who tried to make their quite genuine sentiment and sensibility do duty for idea. Lacking the larger, generative quality, they were like men living on capital—a process which, in art, can not go on for long. Even the resources of Renoir, Cézanne and Redon, upon which they chiefly drew, existed only through the renewal of vision which those masters continued to have until the end of their long lives. Another generation, without the vast experience of the older men as a foundation, needed to put forth a special effort of its own. Instead, the Salon d'Automne and its allied exhibitions showed preciosity, the exploiting of nuances, and a tendency towards the decorative arts—that almost sure sign, in modern times, of ill-health. For the decorative arts of the past owe their beauty to the craftsmen, to the artisans, whose pride in their work now finds its true expression in the miracles of our machine-shops, in such modern perfections as the engine, steering-gear and other parts of the automobile which arrest our admiration as we pass the shop-windows where they are displayed. These admirable things grow “from the ground up,” and the painter of pictures who tries to approach them from the top—from an aspect of beauty which is so different from that of his own work—is ridiculous in his failure to comprehend the source of excellence in the applied arts, and accuses himself of impotence in the practice of his own. Impotence was precisely what threatened, twenty-odd years ago, when the splendour achieved by the artists of the preceding decades lulled the second group of Post-Impressionists into a surcease from creating. An exception must be made in the case of Maurice Prendergast who, in other respects, is to be placed with this group. He returned to America when his period of study in France had made him aware of the problems offered by the Impressionists and Cézanne; and the isolation in which he worked out his exquisite colour and fresh, personal design is perhaps what gives his pictures the vigour which often makes us prefer them to more accomplished performances by some of the Frenchmen of the time, whose superficial likeness to the masters cloaks their underlying weakness.

Dislike for such a softening of modern art gave the final spur to the men who came to be called *les Fauves*. For them there should be no compromise, and they launched out on their emphatic statement of the significance of things as they saw them, stripping their work of every unessential. Rouault, in his first period, had painted dramatic compositions of much beauty, but clogged in their effect by the mass of realistic detail which he had thought it necessary to include. He used his new freedom to stress those elements which he felt to be the expressive ones. It is the caricaturist's method, but he applied it not merely to the story-telling features of the picture, but to the form and colour as well. Violence was the natural reaction of the whole group to the flabbiness around them; and with Rouault, feeding on the strong meat of his law-courts, his religious dramas and his brothels, it was a natural, necessary mood, whose genuineness is vouched for by the superb tonality and the unfaltering beat of line in his pictures.

When *les Fauves* were forming, Derain was barely twenty years old and scarcely recognizable as the artist

we know to-day. Yet when he observed how design was used by Gauguin as a means of escape from mere reproduction of his romantic subjects, when he proved by a return to solid colour that van Gogh did not achieve his immense luminosity by his broken brushwork but by observing the laws of light, he was for the first time falling into the rôle of leadership which he continues to hold. Already the prime reason for his authority lay in the beauty which his grave, logical but imaginative mind has always given to his art. The severe use of line in some of his early engravings strongly suggests a likeness of mentality between him and Dürer, who is recalled again by some of the recent work of Derain, of which I shall speak in a later essay. At least a mention must be made of the charming art of Dufy, the sturdy Cézannesque painting of Friesz, and the talent of Braque, which was to find its real development through Cubism.

It was Matisse who carried farthest the effort of his group. He not only heightened effects as Rouault did, but made daring transpositions of colour and form. The colourists just before him had shown that each tone exists through its relation with those around it; Matisse, by forcing a pale pink into full crimson or a grey blue into full cobalt, would raise all the rest of the scale accordingly, suppressing intermediates but keeping the equilibrium of the colour. It was as if he were observing it under a magnifying glass, not in order to look farther into the component parts of it which his predecessors had analysed so carefully, but to establish on the firmest base the harmonic relation of the hues. In later years, with this preparation well behind him, he has been able to reverse the process and give us pictures painted with little more than black and white but seeming to contain the full range of the palette. In his use of line and mass also, his simplifications were far more than a means of escaping the trap constantly set for us by our modern sureness as copyists of appearances; they served, above all, to permit his investigating the effect of an added weight or emphasis on one volume and the means of compensating it by the thrust and pressure of another volume.

When one has become sensitive to the fineness of three-dimensional design which Matisse, and Derain, influenced by the figure-pieces of Corot, attained ten or fifteen years ago, one has, in judging the construction of pictures, a criterion which will explain the failure of many a work to maintain evenly the impression of beauty which it first produced. Pissarro's fine sentiment for nature must depend for its expression on his clear, harmonious colour and his graceful silhouettes: Renoir, with his deeper classicism, balances his picture in depth as well as on its surface. He does so by instinct and by practice, but other artists have the right to demand a picture “with reasons in it,” as Falstaff said. Leonardo, for example, was searching for reasons all his lifetime, and so it was natural that, in this period of consciousness, Matisse should make especial study of the great Florentine. This study is evident in the picture, “La Toilette,” where the seated figure is simply Leonardo's “Bacchus,” in the Louvre, painted in a new key but held together as a living æsthetic organism by the same play of line and mass. Similarly, if for different reasons, Manet had helped himself to a whole group from a well-known Raphael for his “Déjeûner sur l'Herbe,” as the world failed to notice for over forty years—during which time Bouguereau's resemblance to Raphael was widely advertised, until everybody saw that it was false. We know the moderns as great when they give us the joy that we get from fine ancient works, but these, in turn, are partly explained

to us by the works of our time. To enjoy the marvellous bronze horse lately added to the Greek collections at the Metropolitan Museum, shall we best prepare ourselves for its beauty by a preliminary study of St. Gaudens's horse in the Sherman monument, a work of almost unredeemed literalness, devoid of any structure save that taught in the anatomy-class? Or, taking a step in the matter of subject, in the material employed, and an immeasurably longer step in the matter of the conception, shall we not find ourselves quite in the line of intention of the Greek sculpture when we come to it from a portrait by Matisse, say that most beautiful one of Mme. Matisse, dating from 1913? The glide and stop of the lines, the interplay between the hollows and the projections, the whole sense of proportion and harmony in the two works, is governed by the same sense of fitness; in both cases a mind has transmuted the feeling derived from a contact with nature into the new entity of the work of art.

WALTER PACH.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

CHRISTIAN SENTIMENTALISM.

SIRS: I read with considerable interest the symposium of "Christian sentiments" presented by Anna Rosenthal in her letter to the *Freeman* of 30 May. It would seem that the American public must always have some imaginary criminal, in the shape of a foreign nation, in order to gratify its sense of self-righteousness and its zeal for passing moral judgments. The positive bloodthirstiness of the rejoicing in the action of our sanctimonious State Department in preventing Madame Kalinin from entering America on her errand of mercy reveals a depth of hatred, malice and uncharitableness in the American national character that might well give our patrioteers ground for sober thought, assuming that they have any capacity for thinking.

There is another aspect of the question, which your correspondent probably recognizes although she does not touch on it. America's credentials as a self-appointed mouthpiece of civilization and humanity are, to say the least, open to question. America is, I believe, the only country in the world where it is possible to calculate in advance the approximate number of human beings who will be burned or otherwise tortured to death as a species of popular entertainment or diversion. At the time when the American newspapers were going into paroxysms of rage over the Butchkavitch execution, the *Pravda* printed a brief American news-item to the effect that girl students in a Missouri college had taken an eager and active part in a lynching-party. In view of the frequency of such occurrences, the Russians can perhaps be pardoned for feeling that America's outburst of moral indignation might well begin and end at home. I am, etc.,

Moscow, Russia.

A. C. FREEMAN.

MR. FORD'S VIEWS ON MONEY.

SIRS: Evidence that a great many American citizens are seriously considering the nomination of Mr. Henry Ford for President will provoke renewed discussion of his opinions regarding the nature and functions of money. Possibly because of the fact that his views on this subject have been submitted in the form of unrelated interviews, or statements in his weekly paper, there would appear to be much confusion of thought concerning what changes in existing currency and banking systems he actually proposes. By the conservatives, who believe that the financial system now in vogue is the best for all time to come, he is regarded as a dangerous radical who would abolish the gold-standard and replace currency redeemable in gold with certificates representing certain amounts of expended human effort or energy. To the school of currency-reformers who advocate some form of what is termed "fiat money," or Government issues of irredeemable Treasury notes, Mr. Ford's suggestion appears in-

adequate as a means of furnishing a sufficient supply of a circulating medium for all business-needs. By this latter class Mr. Ford's proposed currency based on productive powers is regarded as lacking in the legal-tender quality, and would therefore not be a satisfactory means for payment of debts or taxes. The United States Senators who are demanding issues of billions of dollars in what would be in effect the old "greenbacks," will not be inclined to favour what for lack of a better name may be called "energy money."

In justice to Mr. Ford it should be said that he has at no time indicated that he advocates a resort to Government promises to pay as a substitute for money, or currency redeemable in money. His central idea seems to be that a way should be found to mobilize credits so that all wealth or productive industry could be made available as a basis for the production and exchange of commodities. A long step in that direction was made in the adoption of the Federal Reserve banking system, under which goods in process of distribution are, through commercial acceptances, utilized for the issuance of Federal Reserve notes. Whether it is possible to modify the present system so as to extend the scope of these note-issues to the wealth-forms suggested by Mr. Ford, is an intricate problem that calls for careful investigation of the fundamentals of credits, banking and currency. Herbert Spencer points out that there can be no ideal financial system so long as society is imperfectly organized. So far as his published opinions indicate, Mr. Ford's suggestions belong to the somewhat distant and improbable future. I am etc.,

New York City.

WHIDDEN GRAHAM.

THE PLAIN MAN AND MUSIC.

SIRS: Some of the judgments in Dr. Mason's "The Plain Man and Music," in the *Freeman* of 4 July, must be considered epithets, since there is no way of distinguishing in music "the simple, the necessary and the noble," or that which appeals "to the æsthetic imagination, the mind or the spirit." Others are not epithets if considered with reference to Dr. Mason's assumptions.

One may, for example, assume that music should employ only counterpoint through Strauss, only chords built up by thirds, and only one tonality at a time: then Schönberg's super-counterpoint, Scriabin's mystic chord and the "Six's" "polytonie" are needless complications. Or one may assume that rhythmized melody or the dissonance-consonance antithesis (there is, again, no boundary between dissonance and consonance) or thematic development is a *sine qua non* of music: then music which disregards it is poor; and so on.

Each assumption is a standard by which to compose and to judge; and the judgment is in turn valid only with reference to the assumed standard. But despite such question-begging epithets as "æsthetic principle" and "nature" Dr. Mason's assumptions are not cosmically mandatory. One may, for example, choose the assumptions of the ultra-modernists and reach their uncomplimentary opinions of the music Dr. Mason likes—judgments again valid only with reference to the assumed standards.

So with the rest of Dr. Mason's judgments. Modern music is "needlessly, injuriously, and stupidly complicated"—because, though Dr. Mason concedes that a complex thought justifies a complex manner, in every case of complexity he assumes that the thought is simple and hence only the manner complex, and that a simple thought must be simply expressed. But the thought need not be simple, and a simple thought need not be simply expressed. To adopt M. d'Indy's figure, the richer the costume, the more attractive should be the musical being.

Again, Dr. Mason's failure to recognize a complex thought may follow from another assumption which limits thought to melody, and manner to harmony, figuration and instrumentation; for it may be, as it seems, that ultra-modern music includes in its thought harmony and figuration. If so, then Dr. Mason, in attacking what he thinks is its complicated manner, which he has no right to do, is really attacking its complicated thought, which also he has no right to do. Nor has he a right to suggest that the psychology of the ultra-modernists is that of the tailless fox. He is not only unfair but exceedingly rash, for this particular ad-

hominem argument is clearly more effective when directed at him.

Thus Dr. Mason's distinction between matter and manner breaks down, and with it his case against virtuosity. In fact we owe much of art—e. g. some of what Dr. Mason would concede to be the most strikingly beautiful passages of Strauss—to the exuberance of virtuosity. And the same cry of needless difficulties was raised, and still is, against Strauss, as it has been against composers in the past. Dr. Mason overestimates the importance of difficulties; young business men do not regale themselves with Haydn or Mozart, let alone Brahms or Franck. I am, etc.,

New York City.

B. H. HAGGIN.

SIRS: I thank you for giving me an opportunity to reply to Mr. Haggin's letter. Nothing is more boresome than controversy on artistic matters, and I shall confine myself to a few words on the crux of the whole question. This I conceive to be whether what Mr. Haggin calls my "assumptions" are really such, or whether they have any universal validity. He may be right in considering them mere whims of mine, confessions of personal limitations, in short, the cranks of an "old foggy"; it was the fear that they might be that kept me for a long while from stating my views as uncompromisingly as I did, and as I at last felt that I must; I am ready to stand or fall by them, and if they are wrong they will be forgotten, as they will deserve to be. But on the other hand it is possible that Mr. Haggin is mistaken, that our minds are capable of arriving at valid principles in art, and even that the principles I tried to sketch have more or less validity. In that case, time again will show where the truth lies, and Mr. Haggin and I need not worry about it.

Let me take just one concrete example. Mr. Haggin says: "One may assume that . . . thematic development is a *sine qua non* of music: then music which disregards it is poor." Now is such an assumption purely arbitrary? Is it true that a music which either stated each of its themes once and once only, or else repeated them with a rigorous and mechanical literalness, could possibly be as interesting, to minds made as ours are, as a music which had something of the continuity and cumulativeness of life itself, a music which at first only hinted its meaning, and then unfolded its deepening significance as it progressed? If the answer is Yes, then thematic development may be a feature of music as unessential as it is now undeniably out of fashion. If the answer is No, then we shall eventually weary of those ultra-modernists whose "assumption" is that novelty of texture can in the long run make up for fragmentariness of thought. I believe, incidentally, that this weariness is already widely felt; but that is beside the point.

Were it worth while, I think I could show in detail how each of the other principles I brought forward in my articles roots itself in human nature. In short, I do and must believe that these principles are, not indeed "cosmically mandatory," as Mr. Haggin suggests, because I know nothing of the music of the Martians, but, with proper qualifications, humanly mandatory: that is to say, that there is a basis in human nature for certain universal laws, so that Scriabin, for example, can no more make us hear chords in fourths than a painter could make us see symmetry longitudinally instead of laterally. As for my application of the principles, that is another matter, and doubtless subject to my personal limitations. I am, etc.,

Norfolk, Connecticut.

DANIEL GREGORY MASON.

BOOKS.

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION.

THE Mexican revolution has now been going on for something like thirteen years. The dictator Diaz was overthrown, Madero was assassinated, Huerta was forced to quit, Carranza was overthrown and killed, Obregon is now in power. Is this the end? No one can tell with certainty. What is the meaning of all this turmoil, these revolts and assassinations? Are

they merely a succession of palace-revolutions, of the Roman or Oriental type, in a stagnant, decaying and moribund society, of no import whatever to the underlying population; or are they ascending moments in a real political revolution, that is to say, in a struggle for power between antagonistic social classes, which has so often in history assumed a political form? If the latter, has the revolution already reached its historically appointed goal, has it already put Mexican society in a more or less stable and enduring equilibrium? Or is it still in process, still uncompleted, being pushed forward by one set of forces and backward by another, the ultimate outcome still hanging in the balance?

Professor Ross's excellent little book, "The Social Revolution in Mexico,"¹ enables us to answer these questions. The revolution has not yet done all its work, nor are its achievements so firmly established as to be beyond danger of a reactionary overturn; but concerning its purport Professor Ross does not entertain the slightest doubt. By the very title of his book he makes it clear that he regards the Mexican revolution, not as a fight between cliques of politicians for the emoluments of public office, nor as a fight between plutocratic groups for the control of Mexico's wealth of natural resources, as some people have suggested, but as a struggle of the toiling masses against boundless oppression and exploitation; and its outcome as of the utmost import to the economic well-being and spiritual progress of practically the entire Mexican people; and indirectly, it may be added, to all the peoples of the Caribbean republics, in nearly all of which the economic conditions, the racial groupings, and the social class-divisions are substantially the same as those that prevail in Mexico.

The quintessence of the Mexican revolution may be summed up in one phrase—the land-question—that ubiquitous question which has been haunting the evil conscience of civilization almost from the day of its birth. When the Spaniards conquered Mexico and divided its soil among themselves into large holdings on the feudal model, the Spanish Crown took care to leave to the native villages a certain amount of land, which was to be held in common and inalienable; for the Mexican Indian was not a hunter, but a tiller of the soil. The establishment of the Republic deprived the Indians of the protection of the Crown. To the liberals, with their sacred principles of individualism, abstract equality and no privileges, the existence of the common, inalienable lands was as obnoxious as were the surviving guilds to the French revolutionists. The reforms of Juarez, that great patriot and liberal, were aimed not only at the vast holdings of the Church, but also at the humble communal holdings of the villages; the arable land had to be subdivided among individual holders who, sooner or later, by force or fraud or necessity, were induced to part with it. The expropriation of the Indians went on at an accelerated pace during the long reign of Diaz; this gave rise to rebellions, which served as excuses for further expropriations and for the sale of the rebels into slavery to the great landowners. Before the revolution, the greater part of rural Mexico was incorporated in about eight thousand estates, owned by absentee landlords, many of them Americans and Europeans; the wily old tyrant and his clique of *Científicos* thus aimed to secure for their regime the good will of foreign capitalists and Governments. Though nominally under native rule, Mexico was, in fact, a colony of foreign capitalists; for even the native whites were strangers

¹ "The Social Revolution in Mexico." Edward Alsworth Ross. New York: The Century Co. \$1.75.

to ninety-five per cent of the population, which is Indian or *Mestizo*. It should be added that the Church has invariably been on the side of the landlords.

The effects of this land-monopoly on the life of the people have been truly ghastly. The peon was housed worse than cattle, was without sufficient food or clothing, and did not even get enough sleep, for during the cool of the night he shivered under his thin blanket on the bare earthen floor. On the other hand, his comely daughter had to undergo the *jus primæ noctis* at the hands of the landlord, his young sons and his stewards. The status of the labourers in mine and factory corresponded to that of the peon. Infant mortality was extraordinary; one-half of the children never reached their seventh birthday. The mortality of Mexico City, situated on a high plateau, in a most salubrious climate, is three times as high as that of an American city of the same size; but the capital has splendid public buildings, into which hundreds of millions have been sunk!

The changes wrought by the revolution have been most pronounced in the State of Morelos. Under Diaz, its soil was owned by thirty-two great proprietors. Under the leadership of the Zapata brothers, the peons rose in revolt. Their programme was simplicity itself: "the land to the labourer." Madero disappointed their hopes; the assassin Huerta sent troops against them; Carranza, himself an absentee landlord, did the same. Year after year the Federals came in, razed the peons' hovels, ravaged their growing crops, seized their stores of grain. With their women and children, the peasants fled to the hills, lived in caves, but would not yield. It was a most embittered and seemingly endless civil war, of the sort that began in Russia under Kerensky, but was there cut short by the Bolshevik revolution. In 1919, Morelos had to endure invasion by 40,000 Federals. In these terrible struggles, from forty to fifty thousand of the population perished, the houses in the villages were destroyed by the soldiers, the haciendas suffered from both parties. Only since the fall of Carranza, in 1920, have the people been left in peace. They did not win the republic for their programme, but Morelos is theirs; and what they have achieved in this short time points to what Mexico may become under a different order.

In the summer of 1920 [Dr. Ross tells us] the people were in rags—no homes, no implements, no oxen. Often with their own strength they pulled the plough through the soil. Since then they have raised . . . two crops a year in this paradise, and out of the exported surplus they have been providing themselves with implements, draft-animals, and clothes. Not a tattered garment did I espy. In every field oxen are to be seen. . . . A returned peon piles loose stones to form a kennel, which he plasters with adobe and roofs with corn-stalks. He burns limestone and carries the product on his back over twenty miles of lava trail to Cuernavaca. He converts his lime into fowls; lime and eggs into pigs; these three into burros, oxen, last of all, clothes. This is the story of thousands—getting on by hard work.

But the landlords growl; the peasant of Morelos produces nothing for Mexico—nothing, that is to say, for landlords.

In other States the revolution has not been so thoroughgoing, but it has abolished debt-liens, wiped out all debts from the peons to their employers, done away with debt-slavery, and is restoring the common lands to the despoiled villages. Any village may be fitted out with common lands from the neighbouring hacienda, so that the peasant shall not be wholly dependent on the petty wages offered by the landlord. This, of course, does not solve the land-question; in fact, if the landlords knew their own interest, they

would appreciate that this system furnishes them with a dependable labour-supply, which is tied to the neighbourhood of the hacienda by its own land-ownership; but it is an immeasurable improvement on the old condition of things. Moreover, the villagers are undergoing a training in voluntary co-operation. There is an executive committee to provide for the distribution of plots by the drawing of lots; and there is an administrative committee to arrange for the best use of the implements and oxen owned in the village, to decide what shall be done with neglected plots, to give advice to inexperienced cultivators, etc. Since the restoration of the commons will not take away more than ten or fifteen per cent from the area in haciendas, several of the States have passed laws aiming at the breaking up of estates that exceed a given maximum, according to the quality and location of the soil. Progressive taxation of large estates is one weapon employed to this end. But the peasants' lack of capital to provide for irrigation greatly aids the landlord in retaining his possessions.

The lot of the hired labourer, in city as well as country, has undergone a corresponding improvement. In 1916, the precious Carranza issued a proclamation making it a criminal offence, punishable with death, for any workman to engage in a strike. But in 1922, 650,000 workmen were organized in a general confederation embracing nearly six-hundred unions, and it is well-known that workmen do not organize to cultivate the social amenities or to discuss minor poetry. Wages have risen, but the rise in wages does not measure the moral advance, which a Welsh mining engineer describes as follows: "This is a new Mexico. Economically the Indian miner is a little better off, but psychologically he is altogether different. It is dangerous now to beat or kick or curse him. You have to speak to him and treat him as if he were a British Columbia miner. He is no longer a cowed man. He feels that his kind are on top and he straightens up with a new-born sense of self-respect."

The Indian's morale has changed, not only as a labourer, but also in his general attitude as a man and a citizen. In the course of the revolution there has been an Indianization of Mexico. Foreign-born whites are no longer on top politically; the Indians are more self-conscious and aggressive; and social divisions based on race have completely disappeared. For the first time in his history, the Indian has something like a chance to develop the best that is in him—provided, of course, that Uncle Sam continues to keep his hands off Mexico.

HERMAN SIMPSON.

MIRTHFUL VERSES.

It seems to be a law of our nature that if we aim at being genuinely funny to others, we must convey an impression that what we are doing is, so far as we ourselves are concerned, entirely natural and unforced. The most genuinely humorous artist I know, Mr. Charles Chaplin, never fails to convince me that what he is doing is done seriously, in all good faith. Millions have laughed at Charlie; few, perhaps, have ever laughed with him. This is as it should be. Even the most tragic of spectacles becomes occasionally ridiculous—Hamlet descends almost to farce in the graveyard scene—and there is nothing more genuinely heartrending than the spectacle of a man trying hard to be intensely funny. The secret of being funny, as well as the secret of being tragic, is the secret of being wholly and entirely ourselves—which is in every sense the most difficult thing we can attempt. The artist,

whether in motley or in tears, is he who is most completely himself, most free to express to the full his proper personality.

These reflections have been stimulated by the appearance on my desk of a number of volumes of recent poetry, all of which might be classed under the heading of light or humorous verse. I am not sure, however, whether the authors in every case really intended to be funny. Let me run over the list and see.

Mr. Herbert W. Hartman, jun.,¹ is, I feel sure, one of those prematurely aged young souls with bald foreheads and horn-rimmed glasses, who bury their heads in shaking hands in order to conduct the "columns" in our daily newspapers. Mr. Hartman tries intensely hard to be funny, and can never reach the end of a poem without thrusting his head through a paper hoop, sticking out his tongue and inaudibly remarking, "I guess that's the stuff that will get 'em!" In another walk of life, he might quite well have become a pallid aesthete and minor versifier, dreamily enamoured of the poetry of Dowson, Lionel Johnson, and the early Yeats. His book, under the paint and spangles, echoes the tragedy of our generation. Sometimes he even drops the pretence of humour, as in "Jazz" and "Picture Ahead, Kodak as You Go." At other times his humour is too cruelly sardonic, too clear-sighted, as in this:

When I shall die, the thought of Beauty sealed
Within the marigold,
Or softly spilt along a moon-drenched field,
Will leave me cold.

The thought of truth secreted in a deed,
Or wrapped in stately verse,
Will not disturb me. I shall only need
A handsome hearse.

Mr. Vachel Lindsay², on the other hand, is one of those who, however hard they try to take themselves seriously, can not restrain the humour that unconsciously bubbles out of them. His "Going-to-the-Sun" may be intended as a permanent contribution to poetry. It is not that, exactly. But it is, in spots, extremely funny. The spot where it is funniest is in the poem entitled "So Much the Worse for Boston." I should like to quote, but refrain. Sufficient to say that Mr. Lindsay is the Chesterton of American verse, and that if he could only persuade himself that his drawings and experiments in Egyptian hieroglyphics are largely a waste of time, and that not even Glacier Park need be taken too earnestly, he could, I am certain, give us a comic masterpiece.

Mr. Matthew Josephson³ is another one who, if he can ever drop the pose of being serious, will undoubtedly achieve distinction as a humorous artist. His "Vegetable Classic" fairly puts in the shade not only his own efforts, but Mr. Lindsay's. I can not restrain myself from quoting the opening lines of it, as a sample of what I consider extremely humorous verse:

It is my view that Spinach
may be remarked upon for aggressiveness;
one may well regard Tomatoes as uncouth but honest;
that Lettuce is an indifferent diurnal matter;
Asparagus not to be sneered at; Beets and Carrots
perambulating hand in hand—but of the Onion,
that eminent vegetable!—let it here be spoken of
with reverence, of its Protean and ever succulent manners of
charm.

That is almost equal to Whitman's delicious and never-to-be-forgotten:

Faithful to its hill, the little potato
puts out its tender green leaves.

¹ "Imperial Fiddlesticks." Herbert W. Hartman, jun. New York: The Brick Row Bookshop. \$1.50.

² "Going-to-the-Sun." Vachel Lindsay. New York: D. Appleton & Co. \$1.75.

³ "Galimathias." Matthew Josephson. New York: Broom. \$1.00.

I can not conclude this article without some reference to a poem which was doubtless intended by its author to be entirely serious, and which achieves only absurdity. Mr. Stephen Benét¹ is, or has been in his day, something of a poet. I still recall with pleasure the excellent "Five Men and Pompey." But since then we have had the war, and its tragic aftermath of disillusion, and Mr. Benét is now in the position of most young men whose hearts are out of tune with our modern industrial civilization. He has looked wistfully back into the past and has discovered the pioneer; and this is what he has to say about him:

There are children lucky from dawn to dusk,
But never a child so lucky!
For I cut my teeth upon 'money musk'
In the bloody ground of Kentucky!

With a leather shirt to cover my back
And a redskin nose to unravel
Each forest sign, I carried my pack
As far as a scout could travel.

We cleared our camp where the buffalo feed,
Undream'd-of streams were our flagons,
And I sowed my sons like the apple-seed
On the trail of the western wagons.

In his zeal to convert us Mr. Benét has become unconsciously comic. He has overstepped the narrow gulf that lies between the sublime and the ridiculous. He has produced a work that stands at the opposite pole as regards aim and achievement to Mr. Hartman's, and which completely proves my argument that one need not be intentionally funny in order to produce funny verse.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

A FRIEND OF FLAUBERT.

Most biographical studies that have appeared since the publication of Mr. Strachey's "Eminent Victorians" have been, whether consciously or unconsciously, influenced by that writer's detached and subtly dramatic technique. The "new psychology," however indirectly, has contributed to reveal to the distinguishing eye hidden reasons for behaviour obscure or seemingly irrational, and the great figures of the past are emerging before us shorn perhaps of a certain enigmatic glory but invested, certainly when sponsored by the author of "Queen Victoria," with glittering new mantles of precise and brilliant prose. Mr. D. E. Enfield has, in "A Lady of the Salons,"² brought to our attention, with just that flourish of the hand and ironical lift of the eyebrows which are indicative of this later method, the eccentricities and weaknesses of Madame Louise Colet. He has not, perhaps, the reconnoitring intelligence that pursues with nervous and indefatigable craft those evasive subconscious motives which prove to be, when captured, the exact and lucid answers to so many capricious acts. His work is rather a *tour de force*, entertaining and dexterous, never dull, seldom infelicitous, always vivacious and always scintillating.

Perhaps no other woman of the nineteenth century could have served as more legitimate quarry for so clever and agile a pen than Louise Colet. Her fresh and generously ample beauty, terrifying energy, insatiable love of life, childish stupidity, intractable egoism, shallow familiarity with the catch-words of literature, and obtuseness to the sources from which perennially sprang her own disgusts and enthusiasms, made her the very type of unstable, elemental woman whom men first pursue, then fly from and wearily expose, and finally use as an example of the inconsistencies of their sex. Women more clever, more sensitive, more intellectual would never have

¹ "The Ballad of William Sycamore." Stephen Vincent Benét. New York: The Brick Row Bookshop. \$1.50.

² "A Lady of the Salons: the Story of Louise Colet." D. E. Enfield. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.75.

ventured to storm so resolutely the fragile defences behind which so many men of letters remain apprehensively if hospitably sheltered.

That she was successful in her engagements is amply enough attested. The fact that she captured as her lover, after a month's acquaintance, one of the most celebrated men of the day, the fastidious, learned, and eagerly courted Victor Cousin, speaks adequately for her prowess. Mr. Enfield, however, while attributing the cause of the great philosopher's attachment to the fact that Mme. Colet resembled his favourite women of the seventeenth century, plainly infers that he had never so much as glanced at a woman before and was, in fact, entirely "exempt from the ordinary lusts of the flesh." But did not M. Felix Chambon produce proof, in "*Les Annales Romantiques*," that Cousin had indeed suffered the pangs of love and even jealousy long before he set eyes upon the resilient Mme. Colet?

It is chiefly, however, with Flaubert that the name of this famous beauty is associated. Eleven years his senior, at the height of her fame, courted and flattered by such men as Victor Hugo, Sainte-Beuve and Alfred de Musset, her poems having been accorded on four separate occasions the award of the Academy, she became, in a week's time after their first encounter, the exigent and passionately enamoured mistress of an obscure young author from the provinces, of whose writings no one but his most intimate friends had ever read a word. One wishes that Mr. Enfield might have treated a little more exhaustively this epoch in Mme. Colet's life, for to have been the recipient, over a period of eight years, of some of the most beautiful, most interesting, and most challenging love letters of the nineteenth century, from the greatest of French realists, is alone a circumstance which warrants somewhat more ample attention. One does not feel, however, that in slighting the more subtle implications of their curious alliance, Mr. Enfield has been, as was suggested by another critic, unjust to Mme. Colet herself. But he ignores Flaubert's deep, entangling relationship with his mother, which must have played so large a part in his evasive yet eager attitude towards women, and was probably an influential factor in determining his dedication to art. "*Les deux femmes que j'aime le mieux*," he writes to his mistress, "*ont passé dans mon cœur un mors à double guide par lequel elles me tiennent, elles me tirent alternativement par l'amour et par la douleur*." After his mother's death he wrote, "I have perceived during the last fortnight that my poor old mother was the being I loved best. It is as if my very bowels had been torn from me." Mr. Enfield expresses doubt whether the two women ever met; but Mr. Tarver, in his singularly unilluminated book on Flaubert, alludes to such a meeting at Croisset, where Mme. Colet bore down upon her lover and was finally shown the door in no uncertain manner. We have de Goncourt's word, however, that Mme. Flaubert's sympathies were for the most part with her son's mistress: "*Elle avait toujours gardé au fond d'elle, comme une blessure faite à son sexe, le souvenir de sa [Flaubert's] dureté pour sa maîtresse*." What a commentary on the imperishable egoism of human beings which, through vanity, can render void memories rich and exquisite, is that last episode, also omitted by Mr. Enfield, in which Mme. Colet, on seeing Flaubert issue from the Collège de France, turns to her daughter with the sole extraordinary remark, "*Comme il est laid!*"

It is perhaps in those chapters of his book where he depicts her waning years that Mr. Enfield is most interesting, most brilliant. The knowledge of that fate which leaves a woman at forty-five ardent yet deserted, while permitting men of the same age to retain their full virile attraction, was relentlessly driven home even to her

obdurate intelligence. Yet frequently there seems a compensating tenacity of life in old women, something at once malignant and pathetic, gallant and inextinguishable, revealing itself sharply through their increasing disconsolateness. Such was the case with Mme. Colet. Still redoubtable and obtuse, still uninstructed by misfortune, we follow her with Mr. Enfield, pursuing Garibaldi through Italy, courting notoriety in every village or city in which she sets foot, writing her endless impressions, and finally dying at the age of sixty-five, obscure and unlamented. "Thirty years earlier," writes the author, "she would have been missed and regretted by a large circle of eminent men and women. Fifteen years earlier many would have heaved a sigh of relief at the news. But in 1876 it was received with complete indifference."

ALYSE GREGORY.

A NEW STUDY OF SHAKESPEARE.

THERE are two traditional methods of constructing a biography of Shakespeare: the pedantic and the fantastic. The pedantic method, an attempt to establish wholly unimportant points by means of microscopic textual criticism, generally results in the elaborate proof of an error. *Vide* Sir Sidney Lee. The fantastic method generally begins in imaginative conjecture and ends in Baconianism. Both are based on the assumption that we can learn nothing definite about the life of William Shakespeare.

Professor Adams's excellent biography¹ is a counterblast against any such assumption. His life of Shakespeare shows scholarship and imagination reinforcing and clarifying each other. Under his hands the poet ceases to be a mystery, a divine accident, and takes on the proportions and contours of a familiar mortal.

In the first place, the author has examined all the traditional material and sorted it out according to its accuracy. It is certainly not the function of the critic to review the scholastic proof which Professor Adams adduces to support his statements; let it suffice to say that, in our opinion, he has almost never—and never in important matters—permitted his imagination to outstrip his evidence. The career which he outlines for our inspection is neither obscure nor astonishing. The poet was born into a substantial, almost wealthy, family, according to the rural standards of the time; he received an excellent education; his marriage, following the custom of the verbal betrothal, was entirely conventional and probably happy enough; he entered London with the avowed purpose of establishing himself as a writer for the theatres, and within five years was ranked among the most successful of his profession. Perhaps the most interesting contribution which Professor Adams has made to Shakespearean biography is his contention that during the six years between the poet's marriage and his going up to London he taught school. This theory, amply substantiated by the evidence, does much to dissipate the haze in which pedants and Baconians have disported themselves.

The legends he sorts out in the same manner, here rejecting, here affirming. For Sir Sidney Lee's pet romance, that of the deer-stealing, he finds no evidence. On the other hand, the old tradition that Queen Elizabeth, desiring to see Falstaff in love, occasioned the composition of "*The Merry Wives of Windsor*," receives reasonable approval. The greatest test of a commentator on Shakespeare, of course, is his attitude towards the Sonnets, for in this case not only scholarship but especially a feeling for poetic values is required. Professor Adams vindicates himself as a critic by accepting these poems as autobiographical, and as a scholar by acknowl-

¹ "A Life of William Shakespeare." Joseph Quincy Adams. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. \$7.50.

edging that we can not ascertain the identity of the "onlie begetter." It may be added that he vindicates himself as a man of common sense by implying that the whole question of the identity is unimportant.

The biographer has further strengthened his work by delineating with care and some gusto the literary background of the period. His chapters on the Elizabethan theatre, contemporary playwrights, and English life of the time are well documented and sometimes pleasantly visualized. Occasionally he summarizes with memorable brevity a literary situation such as the influence of the Court on the transition between Elizabethan and Jacobean drama:

When a play pleased the citizens and apprentices of London, she [Elizabeth] summoned that play to Court; and what pleased the London audiences—Falstaff, for example—invariably pleased Her Majesty; for, as has been aptly declared, 'Elizabeth was England, and England was Elizabeth.' The dramatists thus did not have to consider the Court. . . . But with the coming of the foreigner James, who had little understanding of and no sympathy with the popular feeling of the English, this state of affairs was altered, and the drama slowly but surely underwent a profound transformation.

The volume is not always so felicitous. Parts of it are heavy, parts are overburdened with repetitions and foot-notes. The chapter on Essex is an historical absurdity. The author has an incorrigible tendency to idealize every one with whom our ever-living poet came in contact. The Earl of Southampton, who was a friend of Shakespeare's, was a supporter of Essex; therefore Essex was a splendid creature and his miserable riot a crusade. The truth of the matter is that Essex was an insufferably pompous cad, a player to the gallery, and a traitor to boot. The result of this violation of history is a contradiction so blatant as to be amusing. Shakespeare, whose gentleness of heart has been insisted upon all through the volume, is described as never forgiving "Elizabeth for her heartless treatment of the gallant Essex and her long imprisonment [he was imprisoned exactly two years] of Southampton. This may perhaps explain why he refused, in spite of several protests, to write, as did so many poets, an elegy on the great Queen who had taken such delight in his plays. . . ." The Queen, on the other hand, summoned Shakespeare and his fellows to Court at Christmastide as usual. "Thus within a week the Chamberlain's Men [Shakespeare's Company] appeared before Her Majesty four times—ample evidence that they had not suffered a permanent loss of royal favour through their unlucky part in the Essex plot." Which character does Professor Adams portray as the more vindictive, the "gentle" Shakespeare or the "heartless" Elizabeth?

Let us call the Essex chapter an unfortunate accident in an otherwise excellent book.

ROBERT HILLYER.

SHORTER NOTICES.

ACCORDING to one authority, we are just passing the nadir of the "Dark Ages of Unbelief." It is certainly true that to-day we are not so hasty in despising the occult lore of our ancient progenitors. As we study psychology, anthropology and numerous other respectable branches of human knowledge, we constantly discover that our grandfathers were a bit sweeping, and often decidedly unfair, in rejecting the facts which they could not explain. Dr. Maddox¹ has made a valuable study of the medicine man of all ages and races. He has collected an astonishing group of facts intended to adumbrate the growths of religion and medical science. But he never tries to explain his facts; indeed,

¹ "The Medicine Man; a Sociological Study of the Character and Evolution of Shamanism." John Lee Maddox. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.25.

whenever he recounts a marvel, he is careful to use the adjectives beloved of newspaper-reporters: "alleged," "supposed," and so forth. His frank contempt for the irrationality of his material is underscored by still fiercer words, although occasionally he retrenches so far as to say: "The medicine man . . . is not always and everywhere an unprincipled, unmitigated knave." Other equally generous statements are to be found elsewhere. We resent this. As rational beings, we do not need to be reminded that the ceremonies and simples did not work (though we are inclined to believe in the shaman's sincerity). As poetic souls, we object strongly to having good stories spoiled constantly. We are puzzled to guess why a man should bother to write a book on a subject which he despises. But the preface explains all. In its original form, this book was a Ph.D. thesis at Yale; and one can not risk one's dignity when pursuing a doctorate.

S. F. D.

THERE could hardly be a better country than Ireland for the inspiration of writers of memoirs. In the first place, the Irish are a born race of conversationalists; in the second, they let their humours blossom in an unembarrassed freedom which makes Anglo-Saxons envious; and last of all, they do not give themselves entirely away, they keep some unexpected reticence—not that of other people—which, by holding us at a distance, maintains our interest. One has only to live among them with a pencil and a notebook for a volume of memoirs somehow or other to accrue. Mrs. Tynan's "The Wandering Years"¹ shows us what might be a good average result of this method. One might complain, perhaps, that she is too impartial in her interest and gives it too readily to events and circumstances which are not very interesting; to dogs, cats and the ordinary business of eating, sleeping and getting about. This is a little irritating in one who, by her own confession, is intimate with "A. E.," "Willie" Yeats, Mr. G. K. Chesterton, Mr. Arnold Bennett and Miss Rose Macaulay, of whom she tells us far less than popular rumour and Mr. George Moore told us many years ago. The fact is that Mrs. Tynan is far too scrupulous for a memoir-writer, and has very little appreciation of what is disreputable in social life. Within the limits set by an Irish respectability and a gentle sentimentality, however, the book is not without literary resource and is enlivened by a likeable disposition. Occasionally through the amiable bustle of the country-house life which the author describes, a hint of the sufferings of Ireland breaks in; we are told, not without a vivid stroke or two, of the last hours of James Connolly; and some casual exploit of the Sinn Feiners is related, for its "human interest." Only its Irish humanity keeps this rambling record from being a little prosy.

E. M.

A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK.

THERE is one point that recurs again and again in the biographical study of Dostoevsky which his daughter published a year or two ago. This point was that Dostoevsky's inheritance was Lithuanian rather than Russian; and his daughter lost no opportunity to repeat it in every possible connexion. In one connexion, however, it seemed to throw real light on the subject: Mlle. Dostoevsky used it to explain her father's morbid fear of losing touch with Russian life. It is very remarkable that this writer whose work seems to express everything that is most characteristic of the Russian mind should have been so apprehensive when he was not in immediate contact with Russia. This, indeed, is what strikes us most as we read the collection² of his letters and reminiscences that has just been published. "It is so difficult for me to live without Russia," he writes to his friend Maikov, during his four years exile (1867-1871) in Germany, Switzerland

¹ "The Wandering Years." Katherine Tynan. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. \$5.00.

² "Dostoevsky: Letters and Reminiscences." Translated from the Russian by S. S. Kotliansky and J. Middleton Murry. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

and Italy. That is the note of ordinary homesickness; but what are we to say to the following?

But I can not write it [a projected novel] here; utterly impossible; I absolutely must be in Russia. Without Russia I can't write it.

My health is quite good, leaving aside my fits, and I can bear all kinds of trouble; but if I were to remain here a year longer, I should be surprised if I were able to write anything; I don't mean write it well, but write it at all—I've got so out of touch with Russia.

My writing does not come off . . . or it is produced with terrible difficulty. What all this means—I do not know. But I think it is my need for Russia. At whatever cost I must return to Russia.

What does this mean? He was a Lithuanian, his daughter says: he felt that he was "capable of being absorbed by Europe."

So it appears, at any rate. "I have completely lost my bearings," he writes from Geneva. And again, after his return to Russia, looking back on these years:

With horror I began to notice that I was falling behind Russia; I read three papers, and spoke with Russians; but there was a something which as it were I did not understand. I had to come back and see with my own eyes.

One can hardly help surmising from this that he was not very sure of his Russia, that he did not possess it quite as a matter of course—for he was obviously prompted by the instinct of literary self-preservation. We remember the comment that his daughter makes on his early writings: "The novels he wrote before his imprisonment were all imitations of European works: Schiller, Balzac, Dickens, George Sand and Walter Scott were his masters. He believed in the European newspapers as one believes in the Gospels. He dreamed of going to live in Europe, and declared that he could only learn to write well there." His imprisonment repatriated him, so to speak: it required the experiences that he recounts in "The House of the Dead" to focus his mind on Russian life and the Russian character. He was Russian in a sense not by birth but by re-birth: that is the drift of Mlle. Dostoevsky's argument. Assuming that the argument is tenable, how many of the facts of his life it seems to explain!

HE unquestionably felt that his literary welfare was bound up with his "Russianism"; he had observed that, for him, to "fall behind Russia" was to lose the power to write. That is easily understood: a novelist must have his world. If he has the power he can universalize his characters, but he must have the firmest grasp upon some one field of reality, if he is to create the ideal world which, in its way, corresponds with reality; and the novelist is yet to be seen (unless we except Mr. Conrad) who has mastered any other field of reality than that to which his earliest associations have introduced him. Dostoevsky knew this: we can not otherwise explain the panic into which he fell at Geneva. He felt that he might become "less Russian," and, so becoming, lose the reality that gave its force to his genius. The question leaps to our minds, then, whether this fact is not the key to many of the most curious phenomena of his life. We remember his praise of Pushkin's "universal sympathy," how he insisted that Pushkin, alone among European poets, had been capable of "reincarnating himself in the genius of foreign nations," that this faculty was, indeed, "a completely Russian faculty, a national faculty." Place beside this his comments on the "foreign" peoples among whom his exile was passed, and we are driven to the strangest of conclusions:

[The Germans] You can't believe the dishonesty of everything here, in commerce at any rate. The present-day German trader not only deceives the foreigner (this would yet be pardonable), but he literally *robs* him.

[The Jews] There is everywhere a Jewish influence, for, it [a certain pamphlet] alleges, the Jewish spirit and nationality are higher than the German, and they have indeed inculcated in Germany the *spirit of speculative realism*, etc. etc. Thus, my view turned out to be right; the Germans and Jews themselves testify to it.

[The Swiss] Oh if you only knew what a stupid, dull, insignificant, savage people it is! . . . Bourgeois life in this vile republic has reached the *ne plus ultra*. . . . The customs are savage. . . . Their inferiority of development; the drunkenness, the thieving, the paltry swindling that have become the rule in their commerce! Yet they have some good traits which after all place them immeasurably above the Germans. (In Germany I was above all struck by the stupidity of the people: they are infinitely stupid, they are immeasurably stupid.)

[The Italians] I am sick of this Florence.

"Universal sympathy . . . a completely Russian faculty, a national faculty"? It is difficult to suppose that Dostoevsky could have claimed this "universal sympathy" as a peculiarly Russian trait, that he could have claimed it with such passionate sincerity, if he had not felt it in himself—felt it so strongly that he recognized in it a menace to his own literary integrity. How indeed can we explain his hostility to the foreign peoples among whom he was thrown save as a carefully cultivated attitude, an "induced" hostility, instinctively fostered for self-protective reasons in a mind which, at the peril of its own efficiency, was only too exposed to European influences?

I MERELY throw this out as a suggestion, for how can we get to the bottom of these obscure concatenations of cause and effect? If it is true, however, what a light it throws upon Dostoevsky's hatred of the Europeanized Russian, the lifelong rancour, for instance, that he cherished against Turgenev! The only weaknesses that we are never able to forgive in others are the weaknesses to which we ourselves are prone; and there must have been something profoundly personal in Dostoevsky's undying bitterness against the "dung-beetle Bielinsky" and the other "Westerners." But if this is so, what are we to say of that other, that complementary passion which became the ruling passion of his life, the passion of Slavophilism, of "Russian unity"? "The chief thing—the self-realization of the *Russian* man in oneself—that is what is needed," he writes to Maikov. There we have the heart of his doctrine, the doctrine that made him at once the spiritual leader of his people and the friend of Pobiedonoszev and the forerunners of the Black Hundreds. The statement certainly smacks of the zeal of the convert, of the man who, in the profoundest meaning of the phrase though all unconsciously, protests too much. We have heard of other great nationalistic movements—Disraeli's Young England, D'Annunzio's Neo-Imperialistic Italy—that have been instigated by men whose relation to the people involved might be suspected of a certain obliquity; and it has long been evident that the influences that sway humanity are often the direct results of the most insignificant "accidents" in the lives of certain powerful individuals. It is not utterly fantastic to suppose, then, that Dostoevsky's belief in Russia's world-destiny had its root in a *will to believe* in Russia's world-destiny, and that this, in turn, sprang from the unique necessity of his own artistic life.

From coast to coast.

Well spoken, Washington.

I like the *Freeman* as a free lance. Your interpretation of political activities is clear, frank and fearless. Your analyses of governmental policies, domestic and foreign, bares the real underlying issues and helps to arrive at a clear understanding of questions made hazy by our daily press news agencies. Your occasional ironical thrusts, hot though they frequently are, I charitably accept. Your clear, concise and comprehensive statement of the cause of wars is a fine expression and I compliment you on same.

Spokane, Washington.

Almost never on the thumb.

You have a way of hitting the nail square on the head, and then clinch it on the other side. Most people are blinded by the smooth reading that is covered up by a blanket of snow, but I'm satisfied you can melt the snow, or see what's underneath without melting it.

Well, so long—drive plenty of nails, and don't fail to clinch them.

Freehold, New Jersey.

Despised and resented of eight.

I am enclosing a money order for (\$2.75) two dollars and seventy-five cents for the *Freeman* for ten weeks and a copy of J. K. Turner's "Shall It Be Again." I have been buying the *Freeman* from news-stands for some time and I like it heartily. I fully appreciate your policy of editorial independence—not giving the reader what he thinks he wants—still there is a certain very regular class of articles in the *Freeman* which I have to skip and inquiries of seven other *Freeman* readers have shown all eight unanimous of this. I refer to the frequent eulogies of those verbose and dilatory old English poets whom no one (almost) has time to read to-day. We resent their inclusion because they exclude other articles in the regular *Freeman* vein.

Los Angeles, California.

A genuine interest.

From your advertisement I note that Thorstein Veblen is writing in the *Freeman*, and I am very much interested in what he has to write, so herewith is my check for a year's subscription.

Please start my subscription with the issue which contains the first of Mr. Veblen's articles, sending me the back numbers if any.

Niles, Michigan.

The essence of truth.

If the effect of praise is to encourage and stimulate one's activities, I have nothing but words of praise to shower upon your artistic and comprehensive work—the *Freeman*. The *Freeman* like the truth itself, has no especial regard for theories, institutions and personalities just because they are what they are. Instead it meets our commendation where commendation is due and condemnation where condemnation is due. This is the spirit and essence of truth; and I am for it.

New York City.

"**N**O BOOK IS SACRED," said Mr. Shaw (we do not apologize for quoting him on this page two weeks in succession), "*to the reader who understands it.*"

If that idea were to gain currency, how many dear, dead orthodoxies there would be! It is uncommon for the general run of men to realize that orthodoxy also represents an attitude towards other than theological beliefs; that, although men may be free-thinkers as far as religion goes, they may still hold unquestioning and unreasoning faith in certain accepted social, political, economic and æsthetic dogmas.

The FREEMAN is engaged in making people understand, so that nothing may remain sacred except understanding. It exposes rather than assails, and thus it brings into play the readers' mental energy. Consequently its appeal is to the million, not to the hundred million; to the leaders and thinkers, and only indirectly to the followers.

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